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# CIVIL WAR HISTORY



VOLUME ONE NUMBER ONE

MARCH 1955

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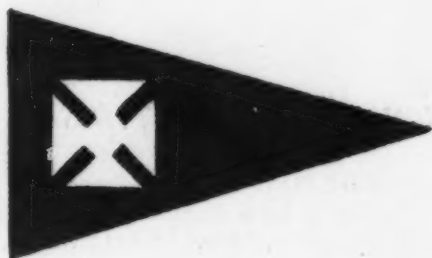
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# Civil War <sup>in</sup> History

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CLYDE C. WALTON, *Editor*

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VOL. I

*March, 1955*

NO. I

## *Subscriptions & Manuscripts*

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## CIVIL WAR HISTORY

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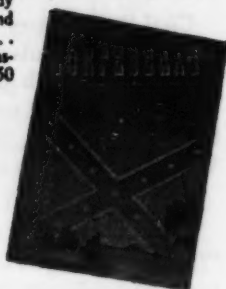


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DR. FREEMAN, the dean of Civil War scholars, passed away June 14, 1953. This speech, given before the Civil War Round Tables in Richmond, May 7, 1953, has been taken from a tape recording made at the time, and has not been substantially revised. We are greatly indebted to Mrs. Freeman for her permission to publish Dr. Freeman's remarks.

## An Address

DOUGLAS SOUTHALL FREEMAN

FIRST OF ALL, ladies and gentlemen, I wish to say that you have come to Richmond to receive the warmest welcome we can extend you, but you have come at a time when unfortunately there are grave limitations on what some of us can do for your entertainment. Before I knew of your plans, we set for this very weekend the meeting in Richmond of the National Advertisers of our Richmond newspapers. These gentlemen I am to conduct tomorrow and the next day on pilgrimages of grace in this part of the Commonwealth. For that reason, and for that only, I shall be denied what otherwise would be my great delight in going with you and participating in what I hope will be your interesting discussions of this area. You will understand that nothing short of this most compelling necessity has kept me from having the privilege of being with you and of learning from you more about the various fields you may visit and your reflections on them. I hope at least that I may be able to shake your hands and to thank you for coming to Virginia.

I purpose tonight to talk to you for exactly one half hour and at the end of that time to try to answer such questions as you may see fit to put to me. In this half hour I am going to try to describe five of the difficulties that a historian of the war of 1861-65 encounters. They are by no means the only problems that have to be faced. They have nothing to do, in general, with those sources of information that may be uncovered or yet may be missing. They are, in the main, matters of historical critique, and when we have reviewed these five, I shall come at the end to a consideration of the final factor in the last of these points. That will lead to my closing appeal to you — one I hope will find an answer in your own hearts.

Every student of this period finds himself confronted with testimony from three different types of witnesses. One of those might be called the

immediate witnesses. Another type is represented by the men and women who felt it necessary, or profitable, or desirable, to write, almost immediately after the conclusion of hostilities. In this category, for example, belong the memoirs of General Beauregard. We have, after that, the third classification — a later series of witnesses who may be said, broadly, to have begun their work at the time of the publication of the *Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, and simultaneously the appearance of that very remarkable book known as *Battles and Leaders*.

Unfortunately, we have a great many writers on this period who accept as equally deserving of credibility the testimony of contemporaries and the testimony of men who wrote twenty or thirty years after the war. It is a very grave mistake to give the same measure of acceptance to the late witness that is given to the early witness. So it is for this reason, among others, that we find the most invaluable of all the documents relating to the period of your study the correspondence volumes of the *Official Records*. Here we have the account from the field of action. It has the limitations that inevitably inhere in that type of testimony; but it has also the element of immediacy about it. No more interesting development in the study of the Civil War has come than that of the new emphasis on the correspondence, whereas thirty or forty years ago, all the emphasis virtually was on the reports. As a matter of fact, you will find in a good many instances that the reports themselves were so long delayed that they are a denial in part of the statements set forth at the moment in the correspondence.

These evidences, these historical source materials, are invaluable. When you come to those records of events made after a prolonged interval, you have then to apply the critique of failing memory and that odd critique, gentlemen, of public utterance. That is a strange thing to have to say, but other things being even, the witness twenty years after the event always must be cross-examined by you with the greatest care. He is the witness who has told his tale over and over again. Beware of the man who became a public lecturer on the Civil War, because almost always he adorns his story with every telling, until it becomes exceedingly difficult to ascertain the fabric of fact that underlies the embroidery of fancy. We had, for example, one very distinguished Confederate secret agent who was a remarkably brave man. He was called a spy sometimes and sometimes a scout. After the war he spent a good many of his years lecturing around the country, and later, some of his experiences were printed. The result is lamentable, but true: he told his tale so often and garnished it so liberally, that sometimes it was almost impossible to believe anything he said. My father, who was a realist and at the same time a courteous man, went so far as to say that this particular witness was the biggest liar in the whole Confederate Army.

Furthermore, the late witness must be subjected to another critique,



namely, that of his age at the time of a given incident. Here, for example, is a young man who once met General Grant in the road; the General stopped and asked him a question. He had never seen Grant before; he never saw him afterward. The fact that he had seen Grant was one of the great events of his youthful memory. That man's statement is much more to be trusted than the statement of a man who saw General Grant every day, talked with him every day, and quite frequently became confused as to the sequence of events about which he may be writing.

Once in a long while you meet a man who has one of those incredible memories that stamp what he said as accurate fifty years after the event. Such a man, for example, was Colonel Walter H. Taylor, whose two books on the Virginia campaign are, of course, familiar to you. In 1915 when we were observing the fiftieth anniversary of Richmond's evacuation and capture, it became desirable to ascertain, if we could, when and how the messages for the evacuation of the city were transmitted from General Lee's headquarters to Richmond on the second of April. I wrote Colonel Taylor about it. Colonel Taylor, as you know, was a young man when he was General Lee's assistant adjutant general, and a man of most extraordinary memory. Colonel Taylor wrote me and said, "I'm not sure that I can tell you exactly what the telegram was; I haven't it. I do not know where it is — it may not be in existence. But," he added, and proceeded to describe the circumstances under which it had been sent, "if that ever comes to light, you will find it was one of a batch of telegrams that I wrote out in pencil because I had no regular stationery and was simply using the back of envelopes and little strips of paper that I had at the time."

About fifteen years after this correspondence with Colonel Taylor, I had the privilege of opening the chest that contained General Lee's military papers. There were those dispatches, written exactly as Colonel Taylor had described them. Fifty years after the event his memory was as good as it had been that fateful day, the second of April, 1865. Such witnesses are unusual. You are fortunate when you find and identify them. In the main, it is a safe rule to question very carefully the testimony of the average witness if it is within even five years after the event. A lot of things can be washed out in memory in five years. Try it out when you go home — any event of five years ago — and ask yourself, "What happened to me on the seventh day of May, nineteen hundred and forty-eight?" Even if you have a diary and look at it, in all probability you won't be able with any precision to restate the facts.

The second troublesome point and one that calls for the application of the best critical methods we can apply, gentlemen, is that of the time of the occurrence of a given incident in the course of a battle. Some of you have groaned in spirit over and over again on that account. You may visit, for example, the scene of the battle of Gaines's Mill — that battle-

field which, with funds provided by the people of Richmond, we were fortunately able to purchase and turn over to the Commonwealth, and in time the Commonwealth gave that battlefield and many others to the Federal government. As you go over that battle, you come to the incidents of various charges that were made in the effort to climb the hill to the Watt house, to cross Boatswain's Swamp, and to reach the eminence. You will find the accounts of the different incidents varying as much as an hour, an hour and a half — in one or two instances as much as two hours. Now that is due to various circumstances: one of them is the difference in men's watches. They did not, of course, take time to synchronize and it was amazing how far off some of them were. Another consideration is that a man who is in action usually shortens the time, whereas a man who is waiting to go into action usually lengthens the time. If you are out under remote fire, waiting to get into battle, fifteen minutes seem a week. If, on the other hand, you are fighting for your life, you may become so absorbed in the combat that half an hour may seem but as a flash of a moment. Always take that into account in your critique.

Moreover, I beseech you, remember that some of us who have examined and reexamined those factors are not to this day quite sure that things happened exactly when we thought they were going to happen or did happen. You can, as a rule, gentlemen, tell the student from the man who is pursuing just a simple, momentary delight by the humility of the student as compared with the confidence of the man who has read or studied very little. It is not an encouraging thing to say, but the more you probe, the less confident you are that you know precisely what occurred.

I often have looked at Lytton Strachey's five-page account of what was happening in the mind of Essex after a famous interview with Queen Elizabeth. Five pages he devotes in his "psychography," so-called, to the thoughts of Essex at that particular time. Although I lived for twenty years with General Lee and have lived for ten years with General Washington, I am prepared humbly to submit to you that I do not know what either of them ever was thinking at a given moment unless he happened to have written it down himself. We cannot be too sure. Of all the frauds that ever have been perpetrated on our generation, this "psychography" is in my opinion, the worst. How dare a man say what another man is thinking when he may not know what he himself is thinking! That is the fate of a good many of us.

Another critique that always has to apply is the critique of the weather — the influence of the weather and of the strain it may impose on the individual soldier. In this connection, it seems to me, there can be a co-operative effort on the part of all of you. I beseech you, give us what we do not now have but long have needed, namely, a meteorological register of the War Between the States. There are a great many days when we



know nothing about the weather; we have no report of the temperature; we do not know whether the dust was rising or the mud was covering the men; we do not know to what extent the weary soldier was burdened by sand, or to what extent his advance was facilitated by a hard-surfaced road. These are factors of the utmost importance and could be employed to inestimable advantage if you did with respect to the weather and the temperature what so many British students did in preparation of the great Oxford Dictionary. That is, as you read and study and note weather on a given date, make it matter of record then and there. Have some of your Civil War Round Table personnel keep a document of all your findings. I believe in five years of hard reading we can double what we know in the way of the meteorology of the War. Knowing that, we will know a great deal because, I'm quite sure, the doctrine of five-day fatigue, which was developed in treating Stonewall Jackson's operations during the Seven Days campaign, is a doctrine that has very large potentialities in our understanding of what soldiers can do and what men can endure under strain. Something happens to a fighting man on the fifth day. Thereafter, his action becomes almost automatic. We will know better about the extent of that strain if we know more about the weather.

Of course, the fourth factor that calls for a most careful critique is the nature of the terrain of action. How often we are deceived. How many times it happens that we think we know the ground, and we do not. It is exceedingly difficult, even when you are following as careful a man as Warren, for example, who was an engineer, and always interpreted his movements in engineering terms, and in terms of terrain. It is exceedingly difficult, I say, to get the precise picture of a particular area at a given time. Unless you know that, many of the most important phases of action are concealed from you. It is essential, therefore, that you study your terrain and study it carefully.

Tomorrow you may go with my dear friend, Mr. Ambler Johnston, out to Second Cold Harbor. There you will see those incredible works that still remain. It may surprise you to know that I spent three weeks trying to make certain at which of two points a particular break-through occurred. Because the similarity of those two bits of terrain on the map was so great, it was almost impossible to distinguish one from the other.

We can do a lot now that we never could do when we did not have the three-dimensional map, and we can find a great many things from the air that we did not know and could not have learned from the ground. I remember once flying over the terrain between the Tigris and the Euphrates. There had been a great deal of question in that region concerning where the walls of a great city had been extended. On the ground you could not discern it; from the air you could see it perfectly.

Of course these maps are not as easy to read as one might think. General Peckham and I can tell you that we on occasion at some of our service

schools have had a good deal of difficulty in getting the men to understand and to read the new maps. Always be quite sure that you know the ground and, in particular, that you know how much cover there was, where the water lines ran, and the difficulties men had to face when they went up a given hill. For example, at Mechanicsville, one of the difficulties of the Confederate attack there at Ellerson's Mill was the fact that the ridge on the eastern side of little Beaver Dam Creek ran quite a long way out, and the promontory at the end was such that the fire from the end of that promontory was in effect an enfilade of the Confederate advance, and crossed fire with the Federal batteries which were higher up on Beaver Dam Creek, near the crossing of the Mechanicsville turnpike extended. That sort of thing happens everywhere.

You say, of course, that the fifth of these considerations is manifestly the most important, namely, the conflict of evidence. How many of you, when you have studied an operation, have thought you had the answer, only to have someone come along who had the opposite story to tell? Not all these conflicts of testimony, gentlemen, will be resolved. I doubt if we ever know in full what happened in any of the major actions of the War Between The States. We never will know everything about Gettysburg; we never will know everything about Chickamauga. As for the Seven Days, the first great battle of which I wrote in full detail was that same battle of First Cold Harbor or Gaines's Mill, June 27, 1862. I rewrote the story of that battle, which I think ran to 20,000 words, five times, and even then I was not sure I had it right. I do not know now exactly where Jackson drew his first line — whether it was at right angles to Boatswain's Swamp, or whether it conformed more or less roughly to the course of that little stream. I don't know and I don't believe I ever will know, but if you find out I wish you would tell me, because I want to revise *R. E. Lee* some of these days when the present plates, now badly worn, have to be renewed and we start all over again.

Where these conflicts of testimony exist, of course we have the old lawyer's rule that we follow the preponderance of the evidence; but that carries you only so far, because every witness may tell a different tale. When that happens, you have to take into account three other factors, three other subsidiaries of this critique of the conflict of testimony.

The first of these is, of course, the position of the witness. Here is a man who writes of a battle and makes a statement regarding it. Does he know? Was he where he could see? That is a matter of the greatest importance. Again, what was his comprehension? Was he where he could understand the significance of what was happening? I know a great many witnesses — and you will find their reports scattered through volume after volume of the *Official Records* — when the man most pontifically stated what had happened, and had absolutely no comprehension of what was in the mind of the corps commander, or the division leader,

whose operation was under way. First you say, is a man in a position to see and to know? Second, is he in a position where he can comprehend what is happening?

Then you come to what is the final consideration. When everything else fails, the test of the evidence in conflict is the character of the man who testifies. I think, as I speak, of one commander, and I am not going to say whether he was Federal or Confederate — whether he was, as they used to say, General Peckham, in the knowledge of their hunger and of their eating of Indian corn — I am not even going to say whether he was fed or corn-fed. He might have been either, but he was a man whose reports are the most unreliable documents that exist, for the reason that nothing ever happened in any of the operations he directed — and he was a very active officer — that he had not foreseen, anticipated, and met instantly. Now, everybody who knows anything about war, knows that the contingent factor is to the plan as three to one at least — the contingent factor is three times as ponderable in close action as the preconceived plan. Yet this gentleman never went into a battle that he did not anticipate exactly when and where the enemy was going to strike, and exactly how he was to meet the situation that developed. For my own part, as soon as I discovered that unhealthy trait recurrent in that soldier — and he was quite a distinguished man — I ceased quoting him at any time on anything, and I do not believe I lost one bit thereby.

There, gentlemen, is where we get the great reward of our study of this period. We are dealing four times in five, aye, nine times in ten, with men of character, and the great delight we have is that we can keep the company of truthful gentlemen. No honor that ever comes to a man in life is greater than the honor that may be yours by learning thoroughly the life of one of the great men of that era. So many of their lives remain to be written. Where, for example, will you find a good biography of Meade, who, while irascible and quick-tempered, was a man of magnificent character? Where will you find a life of John Sedgwick, one of the most beautiful men in spirit that the North ever produced? We have several biographies of George H. Thomas — have we a good one yet? Have we an adequate one? Maybe. I do not know his campaigns well enough to say, but I know one thing: I know he was a great man, and it would be a privilege for any of you to keep his company for ten or twenty years.

They often say of me, at my home, that when I had finished *R. E. Lee*, and had sent off the manuscript, I wandered around in bewilderment for days. I wasn't conscious of it, but Mrs. Freeman said, "The trouble with you is, you've lost the company of General Lee." I suspect it was true.

Indeed, there were these glorious men of character, whose word always can be trusted. There were, for example, those ugly tales about the raid of Ulric Dahlgren on Richmond, about carrying combustibles, intending to

incite the slaves, release the prisoners, burn the city, allegations that he had violated the laws of war. What did General Meade say? He said, in effect, "I don't know whether he did it or not, but I know one thing: he never got his orders to do it from me." That is the type of man you can tie to all the way through, North and South.

Yes, there were exhibitionists, there were fools, there were incompetents, there were mediocre officers; but what a blessed heritage it is to have on both sides men who, above everything else, give us the supreme critique of character, when we come to conflicting testimony.

My father, you know, was well in his eighties, when he learned in some way that I was near the end of a rather long study of the army in which he had belonged. He was a gentleman who loved the old phrasing and the old beautiful language, and he said to me, "My son, I understand that you are writing a history of the Army of Northern Virginia." I answered, "Not directly, sir, I'm writing a biography of General Lee in which, of course, the life of the army appears rather conspicuously." "Well, it is a very good approach, to study the army through its commanding General, because nothing that ever happened to us was more inspiring than the fact that we had General Lee as our commander. But I have one admonition to give you." I asked, "What is that, sir?" He replied, "Never depreciate the adversary. What honor was there for a Confederate, if he was supposed to be fighting a coward? They were not cowards, those men of the North. Indeed," — and he drew himself up with all his Confederate discipline of spirit — "Indeed, there never was a greater army in the world than the Army of the Potomac, save one, which modesty forbids me to mention."

It is, in truth, a glorious thing that we can say that on both sides of the Potomac and the Ohio. As I understand it, you are not going to Appomattox on this trip; I wish you were. Of course it is a rather unhappy journey for a Southerner. I had one distinguished group from Philadelphia come here many years ago, to visit the battlefields, and I asked them where they wanted to go. They said, "We want to start at Five Forks, and go to Jetersville, and on to Sayler's Creek, and finish at Appomattox."

Yet, this very point about character appears nowhere more magnificently than at Appomattox. The old road has been changed a little. Ben Ames Williams retraced it, and I think in his last book, *House Divided*, retraced it correctly; but we know that it came down to that little stream and climbed up again, and that there in the streets of the village were the Federals waiting for the surrender of the Army of Northern Virginia, that incomparable infantry.

Rightly, that day, the old Second Corps was put in front, and I think the Stonewall Brigade was put where it belonged, in the front of the Second Corps. There they were — the end. Victory for the valiant North!

Defeat for the ever-battling South. There were men whose hearts throbbed with the same noble impulse on both sides. Gordon was riding his horse at the head of the column. No bands! Everybody carrying his arms as he would. No chance of any parade. Woe, human woe, in its worst and bitterest form! "Order arms," that was the word. "Order arms" on the Federal side; and then, when the head of the column came there to the First Division of the Fifth Corps, with that magnificent man, Joshua Chamberlain of Maine in command, the flags were there, the Maine flag, the Federal flag, and the Fifth Corps guidon. And then, just when Gordon rode up, along the line echoed the bugle call, and at the bugle call one spoken word, and from "Order arms" that Federal column shifted to "Carry arms," which is the marching salute.

Gordon drew his sword and with the grace that marked him to the last — I remember him well — he saluted General Chamberlain. Then turning, he gave his own order: "Carry arms." Victor saluting vanquished! The vanquished returning the honor! I think, gentlemen, we can ask nothing better, North or South, than that on our long march in the uncertain future, we of North and we of South can "carry arms" in honorable salute.

## *Laura, Laura, Don't Secede*

Kiss me, Laura, ere I go,  
Arm'd and drill'd, to meet the foe;  
Gun in hand, and on my back  
A sixteen-pounder – haversack.  
I go; my country calls – adieu!  
To both, my darling girl, be true;  
And come success, come scathe and need,  
Laura, Laura, don't secede.

When on the tented field, perhaps,  
With rations short, and shorter naps,  
We wheel, present, advance, retreat,  
Thou'lt have – O heavens! – at thy feet  
Some one persuadingly present  
Himself and an establishment;  
Laura, no such trifler heed;  
Though he glitter, don't secede.

Cling unto thy mother, dear;  
Let no "Home Guards" come anear,  
Dancing gewgaws 'fore thy eyes,  
Making light of household ties,  
Prating of thy woman's rights,  
Gallanting thee about o' nights,  
Lest the rose should prove a weed  
Basely crimsoned – don't secede.

Good-bye, Laura! No regrets  
If from balls and bayonets,  
From "broils and battles" – (*boils*, I mean;  
For deadlier is the soup tureen,  
When badly seasoned, than the bore  
Of the loudest cannon that can roar) –  
Safe delivered, swiftly I  
Back to ease and thee will fly;  
United then, in word and deed,  
Laura, dear, we'll both secede.



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## Beauregard at Shiloh

T. HARRY WILLIAMS

SHILOH WAS A CRUCIAL BATTLE in the career of P. G. T. Beauregard. For him it was a make or break battle. A victory would have made him one of the greatest military figures of the Confederacy, and he could have traveled the glory road. A defeat or an indecisive result would mean that his military road would continue to lead downhill. He had started on the downward path in 1861 in Virginia. Summoned to Richmond by President Davis, he had come with the renown of Sumter behind him and with the reputation of being one of the finest generals in the South. Then the trouble started. Davis placed him in command of the largest army in Virginia, on the Bull Run line. Soon Beauregard began to demonstrate that he was not ready to command a field army. He produced and pressed upon the government several plans of grand strategy that bordered on the fantastic. They were impossible of execution because they were not based on the realities of available Confederate resources. Beauregard formulated them in a sort of Napoleonic dreamworld; they were too grandiose and complex to be carried out by the kind of military organization the Confederates had. The same weakness appeared in his planning of battlefield strategy at the first battle of Manassas. His combat schemes failed because they were too elaborate to be completed by the organization at his disposal. Success at Manassas came without his having done much to bring it about and even despite grave errors on his part that might have brought disaster. On the credit side of his military ledger, he was courageous and pugnacious. At Manassas he had handled his men well. Judged by what he had shown up to the summer of 1861, he could command a small army or a corps in a large one. He showed promise, but he needed more seasoning before he could direct a field army.

In the months after Manassas he revealed another weakness. He developed a passion for the use of the pen and became involved in a series of controversies, most of them useless, with Richmond. Finally Davis, fed

up with Beauregard's dialectical talents and convinced that he was no field general, arranged to send the general to the Western Department as second in command to Albert Sidney Johnston. Beauregard's friends thought he was being shelved, and they were probably right. Beauregard arrived in the West just before U. S. Grant smashed the center of Johnston's line at Henry and Donelson, forcing the Confederates to loosen their hold on Kentucky and retreat through Tennessee. In the withdrawal Beauregard commanded the left wing of the army, the forces in and around Columbus, Kentucky, while Johnston led the troops retiring from the Bowling Green line. By the last week in March the Confederate fractions were reunited at Corinth in northeast Mississippi. There Johnston and Beauregard discussed the recent disasters and their plans for the future. They knew that Grant's army had moved up the Tennessee and had landed on the West side at Pittsburg Landing, about twenty-five miles from Corinth. It was rumored that D. C. Buell was marching to join him with 25,000 men. Both generals agreed that a blow should be struck at Grant as soon as possible, before Buell arrived. With an offensive in mind, Beauregard drew up a plan to reorganize the army. Johnston was designated as commander, Beauregard second in command, and Braxton Bragg chief of staff. The new organization contained four corps: the first, under Leonidas Polk, 9,136 troops; the second, Bragg, 13,589; the third, William J. Hardee, 6,789; the reserve corps, John C. Breckinridge, 6,439.

Not much time was allowed Johnston and Beauregard to plan an offensive. Late on the night of April 2 a telegram from the commander at Bethel, about twenty miles north of Corinth, was handed to Beauregard. It stated that the Federals were maneuvering in strength on his front. Immediately Beauregard decided that the Union commanders had divided their forces for an advance on Memphis. He wrote on the bottom of the telegram "Now is the moment to advance, and strike the enemy at Pittsburg Landing," and told his chief of staff, Thomas Jordan, to take it to Johnston. Jordan went to the commander's quarters and gave him the message. Johnston said he would like to discuss it with Bragg; accompanied by Jordan, he crossed the street to Bragg's rooms. Bragg indorsed the proposed move, but Johnston raised objections, the chief one being that the troops needed more training. Jordan, voicing what he knew were Beauregard's views, replied that waiting would only enable the Federals to increase their strength and that an attack now would catch them by surprise. Johnston finally yielded. He authorized Jordan to draft a preparatory order for an advance.

In Bragg's room Jordan wrote a circular order to Polk, Bragg, and Hardee directing them to be ready to move by six the next morning. A similar directive was telegraphed to Breckinridge, commanding the reserve corps east of Corinth. Jordan told an aide to awaken Beauregard at



five and tell him that an advance order had been issued. Soon after sunrise Jordan was summoned to Beauregard's quarters. He found the general sitting up in bed writing notes on the backs of telegrams and envelopes. A copy of these Jordan took to his office to use as a basis in framing a directive for the march order to Pittsburg Landing and for the battle order. As he wrote, he also had before him as a model a copy of Napoleon's order for the battle of Waterloo. Before he finished, he went to Beauregard's quarters to sit in on a conference attended by Johnston, Bragg, and Hardee. Jordan said it would take time to write and distribute the detailed order. So Beauregard, drawing a rough sketch on the top of a camp table, carefully explained to the corps generals the march routes and the battle order. Without waiting for the written order, which would follow later, they were to have their troops moving by noon. It was then about 10 A. M.<sup>1</sup>

From Corinth to Pittsburg Landing was approximately twenty-five miles. To reach the main Federal line, the Confederates would have to march about twenty miles. Two narrow dirt roads led from Corinth to the Landing. One, the Ridge or Bark Road, ran north and then east. The other started east, turned in a northerly direction to a hamlet called Monterey, and joined the Ridge Road about four miles from Pittsburg. From Monterey the Purdy and Savannah roads led north to intersect the Ridge Road. At the point where the Savannah and Ridge roads crossed, about eight miles from the Landing, was a home known as Mickey's or Mickey's House.

Beauregard's written march order directed Hardee to advance on the Ridge-Bark Road, with the head of his column to bivouac that night (the third) at Mickey's. At 3 A. M. on the fourth Hardee was to move on until he approached the enemy position and then deploy in line of battle. Bragg's big corps was to assemble at Monterey and march in two wings on the Purdy and Savannah roads to the Ridge Road. The head of column of the right or Savannah wing was to reach Mickey's before sunset; the head of column of the left or Purdy wing was to reach the intersection at the Ridge Road by night. On the morning of the fourth Bragg was to follow in rear of Hardee on the Ridge Road and form a second battle line. Polk, who had only one division at Corinth (the other was at Bethel), was to leave half an hour after Hardee, bivouac behind the latter that night, and follow his line of march in the morning. At Mickey's Polk was to halt and form as a reserve. His division at Bethel was to move down the Purdy Road and join him. After the march order had been written, somebody realized that Polk and Bragg might get on the Ridge Road at the same time. Accordingly, Polk was instructed to stop at the

<sup>1</sup> Alfred Roman, *Military Operations of General Beauregard* (New York, 1884), I, 270-72; R. U. Johnson and C. C. Buel (eds.), *Battles and Leaders of the Civil War* (New York, 1887), 579-81, 594-96.

Purdy intersection until Bragg's left wing had passed. The reserve corps was to assemble at Monterey after Bragg left and move by the best route to Mickey's or wherever the army was by the morning of the fourth. Beauregard's obvious intention, although not clearly indicated, was to place Polk in Bragg's left rear and the reserve corps in his right rear.<sup>2</sup>

Beauregard's battle order would bring the army into action with the corps arranged one behind the other: Hardee, Bragg, Polk-Breckinridge. Instead of each corps having a specific sector of the Federal line to attack, the first two would advance in parallel lines stretching across a three-mile front. Not only was this formation certain to cause a confusion and mingling of units, but it also meant that Hardee and Bragg would have to give their attention to matters on the entire front. The order of battle reads strangely when viewed in the light of Beauregard's avowed strategic objective. The Federal army was between two creeks flowing into the Tennessee. While attacking along the whole Federal line, the Confederates planned to turn the enemy left and drive the Federals away from the river and back on the northern creek where they would have to surrender.<sup>3</sup> This being the objective, the parallel arrangement was faulty. Instead of having a formation in depth on the right, Beauregard's line was equally strong at all points, and his attack was likely to hit each sector of the enemy line with equal strength.

His reasons for the line formation, given after the war, are not quite convincing. He explained that he put Hardee first because that general had the best corps and that he placed Bragg second because many of the latter's troops were recruits and would do better behind Hardee. He also contended that the parallel arrangement was better adapted for the unknown terrain into which the army was advancing.<sup>4</sup> After the war Johnston's partisans charged that Beauregard changed the original order of advance planned by his superior. This accusation they based on a telegram Johnston sent Davis on April 3 announcing that the army was about to advance. Johnston said Polk commanded the left, Bragg the center, and Hardee the right. That is, each corps was assigned a designated sector of the front. Rather than Beauregard altering Johnston's design, it seems probable that Johnston did not know what Beauregard was doing. The hasty planning at headquarters was being done by Beauregard and Jordan, with Johnston acting largely as an onlooker. Johnston did not see the written order until the march started, too late to change it even had he wanted to.<sup>5</sup>

The language of the written order of April 3 seems plain that Beau-

<sup>2</sup> *Official Records*, X, pt. 1, 392-95.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 397.

<sup>4</sup> *Battles and Leaders*, I, 581-82; Thomas Jordan and J. P. Pryor, *The Campaigns of Lieut.-General N. B. Forrest . . .* (New Orleans, 1868), 149.

<sup>5</sup> *Official Records*, X, pt. 2, 387; *Battles and Leaders*, I, 554.

regard intended to concentrate the army around Mickey's that night and to attack the next morning. The order was drafted when he thought that the march could be started at an early hour. But the preparations for the movement — the explanations to the corps generals, the framing of instructions — took time. He had to postpone the jump-off until noon. Even then the march did not start. The streets of Corinth were jammed with wagons and troops. As the hours wore on, they remained there. Beauregard blamed Polk for the delay. He said that Polk, not understanding the verbal order, blocked with his troops and his train the line of Hardee's march. Polk said that he could not move until Hardee did and that Hardee did not receive instructions to move until three. Whatever the facts of the case, which probably were that Beauregard, as at Manassas, forgot to send an order, Hardee did not start until late in the afternoon and Polk until nearly dark. When Polk stopped for the night, he had covered only nine miles.<sup>6</sup> Because of the various delays, Beauregard sometime during the day did the obvious thing. Without preparing new written orders, he recast his time schedule. Now he planned to reach Mickey's by the evening of the fourth and attack on the fifth. In other words, he shoved most of the movements in the written order forward twenty-four hours.<sup>7</sup>

Despite what Beauregard wrote after the war and what historians have written since, the initial delays were not too serious. The movements of Hardee and Polk conformed to the new schedule. Hardee, once started, moved fast. By the morning of the fourth the head of his column was at Mickey's, only four miles from where he was to deploy in battle. Before midday Polk reached the Purdy intersection and waited for Bragg's left column to move by. He waited three hours. Finally he received a dispatch from Bragg saying that he was moving his whole corps on the Savannah road and for Polk not to hold up. Polk then went on to Mickey's, his march that day covering seven miles. Bragg was having all kinds of trouble with his unwieldy corps. Starting late on the afternoon of the third, he did not get the head of his column to Monterey until 11 A. M. on the fourth; his second division arrived late in the afternoon. Although it was only six miles from Monterey to Mickey's, his head of column did not approach the rendezvous until dark. Some of his units

<sup>6</sup> *Battles and Leaders*, I, 596; Roman, *Beauregard*, I, 275-76; W. M. Polk, *Leonidas Polk: Bishop and General* (New York, 1893), II, 90-93.

<sup>7</sup> All accounts of the battle of Shiloh say that from the first Beauregard planned to reach Mickey's by the evening of the fourth and attack on the fifth. This interpretation can be squared with the written order only by assuming that Beauregard meant to get the army to Mickey's, four miles from the Federal position, on the third; advance early on the fourth and spend the day deploying; and attack on the fifth. That Beauregard would waste a day in deployment, when time was so precious to the Confederates, seems absurd. If it be objected that the Confederates did require a whole day to deploy on the fifth, the answer is that the circumstances were unusual and that they never dreamed it would take that long.

were moving in all during the night. Bragg's delays slowed Hardee as well as Polk. He dispatched Hardee in the morning to check his advance until the two corps were closer together. The slowness of his march Bragg ascribed to inefficient guides, the poor condition of the troops, and the improvised organization of the army. Also, he had been held back by his efforts to locate the reserve corps, which had not yet appeared.<sup>8</sup>

On the night of April 4 most of the Confederate army was approximately where it was supposed to be. Tired, bedraggled, and hungry, it was in and around Mickey's and in position to launch an attack on the morrow. Polk's division from Bethel and the reserve corps had not arrived, but they were expected early the next day. As they were to form part of the reserve or third line, the attack could be started in their absence. The worst feature in the situation was the location of Polk's troops. Because of the march mix-up, they were ahead of Bragg. Before Bragg could deploy behind Hardee, he would have to march through Polk.

Soon after midnight a heavy rain started and was still falling at 3 A. M., when Hardee was supposed to move out to form the first battle line. Because of the darkness and the rain, he could not start until dawn. Hardee's corps was not large enough to cover the front between the two creeks. To fill the gap Beauregard had authorized him to place one of Bragg's brigades on his right. By the time Hardee got his own troops and Bragg's unit deployed it was ten o'clock. Then Bragg began to arrange his own line. The hours were slipping by.<sup>9</sup>

Between six and seven Johnston arrived on the field. He and Beauregard had left Corinth on the fourth; that night they slept at Monterey. Before sunrise they were on their horses and riding toward Mickey's.<sup>10</sup> Impatiently Johnston watched Bragg array his line. The left division was not present. Finally Johnston sent a staff officer to ask Bragg where it was. Bragg said it was somewhere in the rear and he was trying to locate it. Johnston contained himself and waited, for over two hours according to one account. At twelve-thirty he looked at his watch and exclaimed "This is perfectly puerile! This is not war!" Riding to the rear, he found the division in the road, its advance blocked by some of Polk's troops. Almost frenzied, Johnston ordered the road cleared. By two it was free, and the last of Bragg's men passed to the front. Bragg now had to deploy the division in line, and Polk had to get his troops up and deployed in Bragg's left rear. Polk, who had been fuming all morning because he could not move till Bragg was out of the way, did not complete his forma-

<sup>8</sup> W. P. Johnston, *Life of Gen. Albert Sidney Johnston* . . . (New York, 1878, 564-65; *Battles and Leaders*, I, 582; Polk, *Polk* II, 93-97; *Official Records*, X, pt. 1, 463-64, pt. 2, 390-91.

<sup>9</sup> Johnston, A. S. Johnston, 560-61; Polk, *Polk*, II, 97-98; *Official Records*, X, pt. 1, 567.

<sup>10</sup> *Official Records*, X, pt. 1, 400; *Battles and Leaders*, I, 596-97.

tion until four, at which time his division from Bethel joined him. Soon after the reserve corps arrived. Since morning the Confederates had advanced about two and a half miles. The hour was too late to attack.<sup>11</sup>

As Polk was fixing his line, he was told that Beauregard wanted to see him. He found Beauregard standing in the road talking with Bragg. Speaking with much feeling, Beauregard said, "I am very much disappointed at the delay which has occurred in getting the troops into position." Polk replied that the fault was not his, that he had been held up by the troops ahead of him, meaning Bragg's. Beauregard said that because of the delay the attack would have to be called off. To succeed it had to be a surprise, and with the Confederate army within two miles of the Federal outposts a surprise was impossible at this late hour. The army would have to return to Corinth. At this point Johnston and several other officers, perhaps attracted by the loud language, came up. Johnston asked what the matter was. Turning to his superior, Beauregard poured out reasons why the attack must be called off. Twenty-four hours had been lost, their presence was surely known to the Federals. "Now they will be entrenched to the eyes," he cried. He seemed to be unnerved by the miscarriage of his careful plans. Johnston, showing more balance and courage, said that he doubted the Federals knew of their approach and that anyway, having come this far, the army could not turn back. He concluded the informal council by saying, "We shall attack at daylight tomorrow." As he walked off, he said to a staff officer, "I would fight them if they were a million."<sup>12</sup>

Shortly Beauregard's gloomy feelings were cheered. Hardee asked him to ride in front of his men to encourage them. Beauregard expressed reluctance, but when Johnston joined in the request he agreed. He stipulated that there must be no cheering; the noise might betray the presence of the Confederates to listening enemy outposts. Hardee so directed, but the order had to be repeated as he cantered down the line.<sup>13</sup>

The soldiers had little to cheer about except the presence of the hero of Manassas. That afternoon the rain stopped, and the sun broke through the mists. The night was clear and cold. For security reasons, the only fires allowed were in holes in the ground. In many units the food rations were short. The weary, wet soldiers, most of whom had been under arms since before dawn, slept on the ground. Beauregard forgot to give orders to set up his tent and had to spend the night in an ambulance wagon.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>11</sup> Johnston, *A. S. Johnston*, 560-63; Polk, *Polk*, II, 97-99; *Official Records*, X, pt. 1, 406, 414, 464, 614.

<sup>12</sup> Polk's report, in *Official Records*, X, pt. 1, 407; Johnston, *A. S. Johnston*, 567-71; *Battles and Leaders*, I, 555, 583-84, 597-98; Roman, *Beauregard*, I, 277-79. Beauregard claimed that Johnston called the council, but the evidence shows clearly it was largely accidental.

<sup>13</sup> *Official Records*, X, pt. 1, 400; Roman, *Beauregard*, I, 530, 533.

<sup>14</sup> W. G. Stevenson, *Thirteen Months in the Rebel Army . . .* (New York, 1864), 148-49; Roman, *Beauregard*, I, 348.



Three creeks formed an important part of the terrain of the battle of Shiloh. They bounded the area in which the battle was fought. On the south was Lick Creek, which took its rise about twelve miles from the Tennessee, flowed in a northeast direction, and entered the river south of Pittsburg Landing. On the north was Owl Creek, which flowed parallel with Lick and emptied into Snake Creek, which in turn joined the river north of the Landing. Near the river the distance between the streams was five miles; it was three miles at the point where Grant's army was encamped between Owl and Lick. Owl was the stream on which the Confederates intended to drive the Federals and destroy them.

The land between the creeks was a rolling plateau, rising in places to a height one hundred feet above the river. A few farms dotted the area, but most of it was covered with heavy timber and brush and crossed by ravines. The roads were country dirt ones; most of the primary roads ran in an east-west direction, which made for bad communications for the Confederates. About three miles from the Landing and almost in the center of the area was a little log church called Shiloh, from which the battle would take its name.<sup>15</sup>

On the night of April 5 the two largest armies yet to come together in the war slept within a few miles of each other, the Federal army strangely unaware of the presence of its enemy. As is usually the case with Civil War battles, the estimates of the numbers of the contending forces differ and conflict. It seems certain, however, that Johnston approached the field with close to 40,000 men. In his camps between the creeks Grant had about the same number, possibly a few thousand less. At Crump's Landing four miles downstream (north) from Pittsburg he had another division of about 7,000. This latter unit did not participate in the fighting on April 6. In the battle of that day the two armies seem to have been approximately equal in size.<sup>16</sup>

As the morning of April 6, a Sunday, dawned, a heavy white mist hung low over the woods in front of the Confederate positions. Then the sun broke through and dispelled the fog. Excitedly the romantic Confederates passed the word around that it was another sun of Austerlitz. The clear sky, the bracing air, the freshness of the Southern spring day united to remind the soldiers of the land for which they fought. So did an address by Johnston read to each regiment as it formed in line. Remember the precious stake involved in the coming battle, the commanding general exhorted; remember the mothers, wives, and children hanging on the outcome; remember "the fair, broad, abounding land" and the happy homes that would be desolated by defeat; remember above all the women of the

<sup>15</sup> Jordan and Pryor, *Forrest*, 117-18; *Battles and Leaders*, I, 465-86, 495-98.

<sup>16</sup> *Official Records*, X, pt. 1, 112, 398; *Battles and Leaders*, I, 485, 537-39; Johnston, *A. S. Johnston*, 670, 685.

South, whose noble devotion had never been exceeded in any age.<sup>17</sup>

While the troops were forming in line, the generals stood around Johnston's campfire. Apparently another argument over the feasibility of an attack started, with Beauregard again raising objections. It was interrupted by the sound of shots as Hardee's skirmish line encountered the first Federals. Johnston said the battle had started and it was too late to change the dispositions.<sup>18</sup> At five o'clock Hardee's whole line moved forward, followed by Bragg 500 yards behind. Johnston and Beauregard stood on a slight eminence watching the men advance. The sound of the firing increased as the Confederates drove through the Federal outposts and then lulled temporarily as the attackers moved toward the enemy camps. Shortly before seven Beauregard met Johnston near the latter's headquarters. The commanding general said that the battle had opened in grand style and that he was going to the front. Mounting his horse, he said to his aides, "Tonight we will water our horses in the Tennessee River."<sup>19</sup>

One would like to know more of what passed between the two generals in their last meeting, particularly of the command function that Johnston assigned to his junior. After the war Beauregard said that Johnston gave him "the general direction" of the battle.<sup>20</sup> Taken at face value, this statement would mean that Beauregard was to control the principal movements of troops all over the field. Obviously Johnston did not intend him to exercise this power — first, because that would have left nothing for Johnston to do, and second, because Beauregard from his position in the rear could not have directed movements at the front. Johnston's purpose is evident from Beauregard's actions during the day. While the commanding general pressed the attack at the front, Beauregard was to command the troops in the rear sector, particularly the two reserve corps, Polk in rear of Bragg and Breckinridge in rear of Hardee. At the right moment he was to commit them to battle and to send forward any other troops to points where they were needed. This function Beauregard performed until Johnston's death, always moving his headquarters forward as the Confederate front line advanced.

In the Confederate records the battle of Shiloh is a story of headlong attacks, brave fighting, confused and unscheduled advances, and a main objective not attained. As the Confederates drove the surprised Federals before them over the rugged terrain, the lines of the attackers lost their

<sup>17</sup> Jordan and Pryor, *Forrest*, 121; Johnston, *A. S. Johnston*, 582; Thomas D. Duncan, *Recollections of Thomas D. Duncan . . .* (Nashville, 1922), 53; letter of Sergeant A. P. B., April 14, 1862, in *New Orleans Evening Delta*, April 21, 1862, clipping in Arthur W. Hyatt Papers (Department of Archives, Louisiana State University); *Official Records*, X, pt. 2, 389.

<sup>18</sup> Johnston, *A. S. Johnston*, 569; Bragg's report, in *Official Records*, X, pt. 1, 404.

<sup>19</sup> *Battles and Leaders*, I, 557, 599; Roman, *Beauregard*, I, 284-85.

<sup>20</sup> *Battles and Leaders*, I, 586.

next line formations. Units from one corps inevitably got mixed with those in another, with a single tangled, irregular line resulting. Finally the corps commanders improvised an arrangement whereby each one directed the attack on a specific area of the front. From left to right the Confederate line was now commanded by Hardee, Polk, Bragg, and Breckinridge. The corps generals devoted most of their efforts to leading charges instead of to organizing their masses and feeding them up to the front. At an early hour many Confederate troops began to straggle off to plunder the Federal camps or to make their way to the rear. These latter Beauregard endeavored to stop with cavalry and organize into battalions to be sent forward again.

Partly because of the actions of the corps generals and partly because of the terrain and stiffening Federal resistance, the initial Confederate advance was slowed. The battle tended to develop into a series of frontal assaults conducted more or less independently. From the Confederate viewpoint the advance was fatally off schedule. The left was moving faster than the right. The Federals were being driven back toward their base on the river instead of northward onto Owl Creek. As the Federals on the Confederate right retired, they came to an old sunken road in a heavily wooded area. In this natural trench General Benjamin Prentiss rallied the remnant of his division; other units later formed on his flanks. Whereas in modern war such a strong position would have been bypassed or contained, the Confederates tried to take it. For hour after hour, while on the left the advance was grinding past Shiloh church, the Confederates flung eleven bloody and vain charges at the place they aptly called the "Hornet's Nest."<sup>21</sup>

Johnston saw what was going wrong with his plan. About noon he moved to the right to personally direct the attack on that vital sector. As he rode among the men, he carried a tin cup in one hand. He had taken it earlier from an officer who had come out of a deserted Federal tent carrying some valuable articles, which he had shown to the general. Johnston rebuked the man for plundering, then regretting his words, he took the cup, saying, "Let this be my share of the spoils today." Johnston exhorted the men to go forward. Tapping their bayonets with his cup, he said, "These must do the work." At one point where the soldiers were obviously reluctant to charge, Johnston offered to lead them. Shamed, they sprang forward and drove the Federals back.

Johnston sat on his horse watching the retreating Yankees. Governor Isham G. Harris of Tennessee, serving as a volunteer aide, galloped up to the general. He saw Johnston reel in the saddle. "General, are you

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 586-91; Jordan and Pryor, *Forrest*, 121-31; Roman, *Beauregard*, I, 283-307; Johnston, A. S. Johnston, 587-609; Duncan, *Recollections*, 58-60; Albert Dillahunty, *Shiloh* (Washington, 1951), 9-15; Otto Eisenschiml, *The Story of Shiloh* (Chicago, 1946), 27-49.



hurt?" cried Harris. "Yes, and I fear seriously," Johnston replied. A bullet had severed the large artery in his right leg. Maybe a retiring Union soldier had paused and drawn a bead on what he thought was an important officer near the front; maybe a stray ball fired at no one in particular just happened to strike Johnston. Guiding the horses away from the line of fire and holding Johnston with one arm, Harris stopped in a ravine and lifted the unconscious general from the saddle. Other officers gathered around. Any person with the most elementary knowledge of first-aid could have stopped the flow of blood and saved Johnston's life. But in the Civil War nobody knew anything about first-aid except the medics, and Johnston had sent his surgeon to look after some prisoners.<sup>22</sup> Johnston died at two-thirty. Governor Harris spurred to the rear and delivered the sad news to Beauregard shortly after three.<sup>23</sup>

After the war Johnston's partisans, particularly his son, liked to say that he died at the moment of victory. They claimed that he had achieved triumph elsewhere on the field and was organizing his right for the final push when the fatal bullet hit him. As a matter of fact, victory had not been won anywhere; the Confederate forces were not fighting under a common direction; and Johnston did not have complete control of his forces on the right, let alone on the whole front. By going from unit to unit at the edge of battle, exhorting the men to charge and offering to lead them, Johnston was performing more like a corps or division general than a commander. At the time of his death, he did not have a single staff officer with him, which indicates that he was not exerting much control over the battle.<sup>24</sup> Whatever general direction was being exercised issued from Beauregard.

Up to the time of Johnston's death, Beauregard had been performing the function assigned him by the commanding general — that of ordering movements in the rear of the battle. Soon after the attack started, he set up field headquarters on a high point between the Pittsburg and Purdy roads. From this point he deployed Polk and Breckinridge in columns of brigades and instructed them to follow Bragg and go in wherever they were called to help; if in doubt where to go, they should move toward the sound of heaviest firing. About the middle of the morning, as the Confederate line advanced, he moved up to within half a mile of the abandoned Federal camps. At two o'clock he established his third headquarters of the day near Shiloh church. Always he had his staff riding over the field collecting reports from the front and rounding up stragglers. Any inactive units that he spotted he directed to the front, sending most of

<sup>22</sup> Johnston, *A. S. Johnston*, 611-15; Roman, *Beauregard*, I, 537.

<sup>23</sup> *Battles and Leaders*, I, 590.

<sup>24</sup> Eisenschmil, *Story of Shiloh*, 39.

them to Hardee on the left. Just before he received the news of Johnston's death, he was about to shift some troops to the center.<sup>25</sup>

With Johnston dead, Beauregard assumed command of the army. Immediately he acted to keep the impetus of the offensive rolling. Contrary to what his enemies said during the war and later, he was not ignorant of the situation at the front or indifferent to the outcome of the battle. From the reports of his staff he had a fairly accurate picture of how far the attacks had gone. He knew that the Federal right had retired toward the Landing and that the left was still holding. Ordering that the news of Johnston's death be kept from the men, he directed that the advance continue all along the line. To co-ordinate the attack on the Federal left he ordered Bragg to take charge of the Confederate right and sent General Daniel Ruggles to command the center. The so-called lull of an hour which followed Beauregard's assumption of control was not due to any confusion resulting from the change in command, but to the time involved in shifting additional troops toward the fatal sunken road.<sup>26</sup>

While the Federals from the right were constructing a new and powerful defense line on the bluff above the Landing, the Confederates were concentrating for a final effort against the Hornet's Nest. Ruggles collected over sixty pieces of artillery and pounded the position with a merciless fire. Shaken by the barrage, the Federal troops on the right and left of Prentiss withdrew to the Landing. Prentiss, under orders from Grant to hold to the last, fought on with 2,200 men. Although virtually encircled by attackers, he continued to resist until five-thirty, when he surrendered. If any one man saved the Federal army at Shiloh, Prentiss was the man. Even captured, he and his troops were useful to Grant. A Confederate regiment was detailed to watch over the rich bag of prisoners.

After the surrender of Prentiss, the tired Confederates drifted toward the Federal line around the Landing. The Union forces were massed in a semicircular position with their backs to the river. The line was strongest on the left or the south side. Here the Federals had assembled fifty artillery pieces to meet the expected attack from the Confederate right. In addition, two Federal gunboats stood by in the river ready to throw their shot when the Confederates advanced. On the Federal right the line faced generally west. For the safety of this sector Grant felt little alarm. Opposite was Hardee, whose pecking assaults indicated he was incapable of mounting a dangerous attack. Besides, Grant's division from Crump's Landing, which had been ordered to the field early in the day and whose commander had confused his route, was finally nearing the scene and

<sup>25</sup> *Official Records*, X, pt. 1, 401-402; *Battles and Leaders*, I, 586-90; Roman, *Beauregard*, I, 285, 289, 294-96.

<sup>26</sup> Roman, *Beauregard*, I, 297-98; *Battles and Leaders*, I, 590; Stanley F. Horn, *The Army of Tennessee* (Indianapolis, 1941), 134-35.

would shortly join the troops on the right. Only for his left did Grant fear. Only from their right, where most of their troops were massed, could the Confederates possibly deliver a decisive blow.

They did not have much power to do it here. At this critical moment the Confederates had no reserve to put in to clinch victory. The last unit of Breckinridge's corps had been committed to battle by early afternoon. For the final assault of that bloody day, Bragg could marshal only two relatively fresh brigades from his own corps — not really fresh, for they had been through the carnage of the sunken road. One of them was badly short of ammunition. At Bragg's order they charged, bravely but without much dash, and were repulsed.<sup>27</sup> As they advanced, a part of a regiment from Buell's army appeared in the Federal line. On the previous day one of Buell's divisions had reached the west side of the river. Soon after the battle started Grant ordered it to the field. Its vanguard was just now crossing. Even without the presence of these troops Bragg's attack would have failed. The reports of the brigade commanders told the story: their men were too exhausted to fight.<sup>28</sup>

It was now after six o'clock. From his headquarters at Shiloh church two miles in the rear, Beauregard sent his staff officers to the corps generals with instructions to suspend the attacks and retire to the enemy camps for the night. His reasons for withdrawing, as given in his preliminary report, were that the troops were tired and scattered; darkness was coming on; and the Confederates had substantial possession of the field. In short, Beauregard thought that he had the Federals whipped, that he could do nothing more that day, and that after resting his men he could complete his victory on the morrow.<sup>29</sup>

To the end of his days Beauregard would be criticized and condemned for stopping the attack. It would be said that he let slip the great opportunity for victory in the West: one more assault and Grant's army would have been driven into the river and destroyed. Bragg started the criticism, at least officially, when he wrote in his report on April 20 that his troops were starting a final attack with every chance of success when the withdrawal order came. As the years passed, Bragg remembered more and more about the episode, until finally he thought that he had threatened to disobey the order. How Bragg could have imagined, after witnessing what happened to the charge of his two brigades, that he had a chance to seize the Landing defies comprehension. He did not think it two days after the battle. Then he ascribed the Confederate failure to the demoralized and disorganized condition of the troops caused by their want of discipline.<sup>30</sup>

<sup>27</sup> *Battles and Leaders*, I, 590-91; Roman, *Beauregard*, I, 301-304; Jordan and Pryor, *Forrest*, 131-34.

<sup>28</sup> *Official Records*, X, pt. 1, 551, 555.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, 386-87.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, 466-67; Don C. Seitz, *Braxton Bragg* (Columbia, S. C., 1924), 111-13.

Today Beauregard's decision seems as right as it did to him on the evening of that hard-fought Sunday. He did not know, of course, of the new factor in the battle, the arrival of Buell's troops, that changed the entire situation. Nor, apparently, had he been apprised that the Federal division from Crump's Landing was approaching the field. But he did know that his own men were tired, hungry, and spiritless after thirteen hours of fighting, too exhausted even to cheer when told they had won a victory. He knew that many of the units were scattered, disorganized, and out of control and that the latest attacks had been feebly delivered. These things he had learned from the reports of his aides and other officers; some of them he had seen with his own eyes. As he rode over the rear area of the field, he saw groups of men resting on their arms, too weary to move; he saw hordes of stragglers plundering the enemy camps. He saw also the sun going down. He wanted to get his army in hand before darkness. As a matter of fact, with the approach of night, as the reports of the brigade and regimental commanders show, many units were retiring from the line without orders. The withdrawal directive merely recognized an action partially in process of execution. Even with an early start, the disorganization of the Confederate forces was so great that some units did not reach their bivouac until eight o'clock. When all the elements in the situation are weighed, it seems obvious that Beauregard had no recourse but to assemble his army for another attempt the next day.<sup>31</sup>

That night Beauregard made his headquarters in Sherman's tent near Shiloh church. There came the corps commanders to discuss the events of the day and plan tomorrow's moves. All felt confident that victory had been achieved and that an attack the next day would complete the destruction of the Federal army. Their optimism was confirmed by the receipt of a dispatch from Colonel Ben Hardin Helm, Lincoln's brother-in-law, in northern Alabama that Buell was not marching toward Pittsburg Landing after all but toward Decatur. Captured General Prentiss, who was Jordan's guest and who was having a wonderful time teasing his hosts with predictions of defeat the next day, unwisely said that the report was untrue. They refused to believe him. At Beauregard's direction Jordan sent a telegram to Richmond announcing the capture of every enemy position and "a complete victory." On the basis of this message, Davis reported to Congress that the Federal army had been practically destroyed.<sup>32</sup>

<sup>31</sup> H. M. Stanley, *Autobiography of Henry Morton Stanley* (Boston, 1909), 198; letter of Sergeant A. P. B., April 14, 1862, in *New Orleans Evening Delta*, April 21, 1862, clipping in Hyatt Papers; Roman, *Beauregard*, I, 304-305, 547-50.

<sup>32</sup> Roman, *Beauregard*, I, 305; Jordan and Pryor, *Forrest*, 135-36; *Battles and Leaders*, I, 602-603; *Official Records*, X, pt. 1, 384-85; J. D. Richardson (ed.), *A Compilation of the Messages and Papers of the Confederacy . . .* (Nashville, 1905), I, 208. Jordan stated, in *Battles and Leaders*, above, that he received a telegram from Helm in the afternoon and gave it to Beauregard after sunset, that

One Confederate soldier was not so sure the Federals were not being reinforced. Colonel Nathan Bedford Forrest, not yet recognized as a great cavalryman, dressed some of his men in captured Federal coats and sent them into the enemy lines. They reported back that heavy replacements were arriving but that a sudden night attack would push the Federals into the river. Forrest found Hardee and presented his information. The cavalry leader advised an immediate attack or a withdrawal. If the Confederates tried to fight the fresh Federal masses the next day, he said, they would be "whipped like hell." In a rather casual way the corps commander told Forrest to take his intelligence to Beauregard. Forrest was unable to locate the commanding general's headquarters. Once again he sent his scouts to the Federal camps, and again they related that reinforcements were coming in. Once more Forrest sought out Hardee, at two in the morning. This time Hardee told him to return to his regiment and keep a vigilant watch.<sup>33</sup> In such an offhand manner was vital military intelligence often handled in the Civil War.

Forrest's information and his salty analysis of the fate awaiting the Confederates were both correct. That night 17,000 of Buell's troops were ferried over the river. With these arrivals, the Crump's Landing division, and the hard core of his own army, Grant had at his disposal on the morning of April 7 at least 40,000 men. Determined to seize the initiative, he launched an attack on the Confederates at daylight. The fighting on the second day was almost an exact reversal of that of the day before. The Confederates were surprised, strategically, because they had expected to be the attackers. During the night and in the early morning hours the Confederate generals had not done too good a job of reorganizing their forces. When the Federals struck, some units were several miles in rear of the first line of encampments. The Confederate line of battle was formed slowly and was not completed until after the Federals had rolled past the Hornet's Nest.

Because of the heavy losses of the previous day and the large number of stragglers who had left the field, Beauregard could put in action only something over 20,000 troops. From right to left the Confederate line was commanded by Hardee, Breckinridge, Polk, and Bragg. Something of the confusion attending the withdrawal on the preceding night is seen in the fact that Hardee and Bragg had exchanged wings, that Hardee commanded two of Bragg's brigades, and that Bragg directed one of Polk's divisions. Polk arrived on the field late with his other division. As the bat-

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is, after Beauregard had ordered the battle stopped. Beauregard said, in his preliminary report, *Official Records*, above, that he received a message saying Buell had been delayed and would not be able to reach Grant in time to save him. It is possible that two messages about Buell were received and that the one Beauregard mentioned may have come in before the battle ended. In such case, Beauregard might have confused them in his report.

<sup>33</sup> Jordan and Pryor, *Forrest*, 136-37.



tle swayed back and forth on a fluid front the Confederate units tended to become more mixed and scattered than on Sunday. Several seem to have been fired on by their own troops. Beauregard noticed one group in a woods who appeared to be clad in white uniforms. At first he thought they were Federals, but he saw they were fighting on the Confederate side. Inquiry developed that they were Louisiana troops. They were equipped with blue coats, and on the day before had been fired into by Confederates. To prevent the repetition of this danger, they had turned their coats inside out.<sup>34</sup>

The impact of the Federal attack forced the Confederates back all along the line. Although the Southern troops resisted stubbornly and at points even counterattacked, they could not halt the resistless blue advance.<sup>35</sup> Their failure was not due entirely to inferior numbers or to the lack of a proper reserve. Confederate observers noted that the men seemed to be losing their dash and fire. Even when general officers led them in person to points at the front, they responded feebly. Beauregard himself, on two occasions, seized the colors of slowly advancing regiments and led them forward. When an officer friend reproved him for rashness, he answered, "The order must now be 'follow,' not 'go!'" Sometimes a unit, after being placed in line, would stand a short time and then slowly melt away.<sup>36</sup> It was not just that the men were bone-tired after two days of battle; their spirits were close to being broken by the abrupt reversal of fortune, by the sudden snatching away of apparent victory.

Jordan, who had been observing the demeanor of the men, went to Beauregard shortly after two and said, "General, do you not think our troops are very much in the condition of a lump of sugar thoroughly soaked with water, but yet preserving its original shape, though ready to dissolve? Would it not be judicious to get away with what we have?" Beauregard replied, "I intend to withdraw in a few moments."<sup>37</sup> He too had been studying the soldiers and the situation. Against the fresh, superior Federal forces, the Confederates had no chance of victory. If they remained on the field, they would be pounded to pieces. The only recourse was to get the army away to safety. For an hour Beauregard had been contemplating a withdrawal. Now his mind was made up. Staff officers rode to tell the corps generals to retire but slowly and in good order. In rear of Shiloh church Beauregard posted a strong rear guard with artillery support. He wanted the Federals to know that although he

<sup>34</sup> Roman, *Beauregard*, I, 316; Basil W. Duke, *Morgan's Cavalry* (New York, 1909), 86.

<sup>35</sup> Roman, *Beauregard*, I, 308-19; *Battles and Leaders*, I, 591-93; Horn, *Army of Tennessee*, 139-42; Dillahunty, *Shiloh*, 16-9; Kenneth P. Williams, *Lincoln Finds a General* (New York, 1952), III, 383-88.

<sup>36</sup> *Official Records*, XI, pt. 1, 402; Seitz, *Bragg*, 113; Roman *Beauregard*, I, 317, Jordan and Pryor, *Forrest*, 142.

<sup>37</sup> *Battles and Leaders*, I, 603.

was leaving, he was doing so with dignity and honor and not in rout and disaster. By four o'clock the Confederates had left the field and were on the road to Corinth.<sup>38</sup>

No Federals pursued them that day or attacked them that night when they encamped a few miles from the field. Grant's army was in no shape to pursue; it had been too roughly handled. A heavy rain started after dark, making the roads impracticable for artillery the next day. Without supporting artillery, pursuing infantry could easily be checked by a few enemy guns. The next morning Sherman attempted a sort of half-pursuit. The Confederate rearguard turned him back with its cavalry alone.

Even without the presence of harassing Federals, the Confederate withdrawal to Corinth was a grim journey. The weary, discouraged foot soldiers plodded on over the narrow, muddy, almost impassable road; among them jolted the wagons carrying the thousands of groaning wounded. The way of the march was littered with abandoned supplies. Bragg found that few officers were with their men. "The whole road presents the scene of a rout . . .," he wrote in anger and disgust to Beauregard.<sup>39</sup> The sad job of carrying the wounded to Corinth strained the army's transportation facilities. Shiloh was the first bloody battle of the war. For both sides the casualties were terrific. The Union losses were 1,754 killed, 8,408 wounded, 2,885 captured or missing — a total of 13,047. The Confederate losses totaled 10,699; 1,726 killed, 8,012 wounded, 959 missing.<sup>40</sup>

Shiloh is the most "iffy" battle of the war. Its might-have-beens have fascinated writers. What would have happened if the Confederates had launched their attack on the fifth? What if Johnston had not died? What if Beauregard had made another attack on the sixth? If the Confederates had defeated Grant, would they have smashed Buell and regained the West? Most of the dramatic possibilities of the battle have been exaggerated. If the Confederates had attacked on the fifth, they would have encountered approximately the same size Federal force on that day and the following as they did on the sixth and seventh. One division of Buell's army was on the other side of the Tennessee by midafternoon of the fifth and could have reached the Landing by night. Another could have arrived early the next day. Only if the Confederates could have made their attack on the fourth, as planned in Beauregard's original order, would they have had a real chance to destroy Grant. On the evening of the sixth Beauregard's cause was lost. Even without Buell's troops, Grant could

<sup>38</sup> Roman, *Beauregard*, I, 318-19; Jordan and Pryor, *Forrest*, 143-46; Johnston, A. S. Johnston, 651-53; *Official Records* X, pt. 1, 388.

<sup>39</sup> Stevenson, *Thirteen Months in the Rebel Army*, 170-71; *Official Records*, X, pt. 2, 400.

<sup>40</sup> D. W. Reed, *The Battle of Shiloh* (Washington, 1909), 23; Thomas L. Livermore, *Numbers and Losses in the Civil War in America, 1861-65* (Boston, 1901), 79-80; *Battles and Leaders*, I, 485, 537-39; Johnston, A. S. Johnston, 656.

have probably stopped an attack with the aid of the fresh division from Crump's Landing. But what if a last assault had driven the Federals into the river? The Confederate army would have been so shattered that it could not have followed its success. On the following day, even after a so-called victory, it could muster only some 20,000 troops. And over the river would have been Buell with 25,000 fresh soldiers. Beauregard could not have advanced for a long time and without reinforcements. Probably he would have had to retire to Corinth to regroup.

In the West Beauregard showed definite improvement as a field commander. The Napoleonic complex, the penchant for grand planning, the tendency to exaggerate the resources available to him — these characteristics were still a part of him but held in obvious restraint. His battle plan for Shiloh, like the one before Manassas, was whipped up in too short a time. He was yet to learn that a detailed design was not the work of a few hours. The march order from Corinth to the battlefield, while overly optimistic as to the results that could be obtained, was not, as has been sometimes charged, unduly complex. Although his battle arrangement was faulty, it too was innocent of the complexity which had often marred his plans in Virginia. After he took command following Johnston's death, he did all that any general could have done in the circumstances. The withdrawal on the second day was conducted with skill. His one bad mistake was on Sunday night, when he failed to take adequate action to reorganize his army and made no attempt to ascertain the intentions of the enemy. He still tended to overlook an important detail, to assume that the enemy would act as he wanted him to act.

Nevertheless, he gave promise, with continued experience, of developing into a useful field general. The promise was not fulfilled because his career in the field did not continue. Shiloh and its aftermath increased the dislike and distrust which Davis felt for him. Within a few months after the battle the President found a pretext to remove him from field command. Beauregard was relegated to direct the defenses of Charleston and to the role of an engineer. For the rest of the war he held relatively unimportant assignments. Sumter, Manassas, Shiloh — and then the glory was ended.



## *The Ambulance Song*

Let the broad columns of men advance!  
We follow behind with the Ambulance.

They lead us many a weary dance,  
But they cannot weary the Ambulance.

We rattle over the flinty stones,  
And crush and shatter the shrinking bones.

Here we ride over a Christian skull —  
No matter, the Ambulance is full.

Behold! a youthful warrior dead,  
But the wheels glide over his fair young head.

See smoke and fire! hear cannon's roar!  
Till the bursting ears can hear no more.

Till the eyes see only a sky blue frame,  
And a lurid picture of smoke and flame.

And the air grows dense with a thousand sighs,  
And shrieks defiance in shrill death-cries.

And blood lies black in horrible streams,  
And we think we are dreaming fearful dreams.

But our wheels are strong, our axles sound,  
And over the sea we merrily bound.

What do we care for the bursting shell?  
We know its music, and love it well.

What do we care for sighs and groans,  
For mangled bodies and shattered bones?

We laugh at danger, and scorn mischance,  
We who drive the Ambulance.

Through rattling bullets and clashing steel,  
We steadily guide the leaping wheel.

Writhing in agony they lie,  
Cursing the Ambulance, praying to die.

While some in a dreamy deathlike trance,  
Bleed life away through the Ambulance.

Hurrah! Hurrah! Up bands and play!  
We're leading a glorious life to-day.

For war is play and life a chance,  
And 'tis merry to drive the Ambulance.

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## Mark Twain's 'Private Campaign'

JOHN GERBER

TWAIN'S "THE PRIVATE HISTORY OF A CAMPAIGN THAT FAILED" first appeared in the *Century Magazine*, December, 1885, and ever since has been a subject of some controversy. How much of it is fact, how much fancy? To make some attempt at an answer, we need first to piece together the bits of information, as well as we know them, about Twain's war experience.

The chief primary sources of information, other than the "Private History" itself, are these:

1. The "letters" of Quintus Curtius Snodgrass.<sup>1</sup>
2. A speech given by Twain in October, 1877, before the Putnam Phalanx of Hartford, Connecticut, when it was entertaining the Boston Ancient and Honorable Artillery Company.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> There is still some doubt about whether Mark Twain was the author of these since they are unsigned and he is never known to have acknowledged them as his. But most Twain scholars now believe that they are Twain's. The ten "letters" appeared in the *New Orleans Crescent* between January 21, 1861, and March 30, 1861. Claiming to be a "High Old Private of Louisiana Guard," Quintus Curtius Snodgrass, Esq. brags of the capture of the Federal garrison at Baton Rouge, tells of his adventures at a military ball (to his horror his lady friend insisted on drinking champagne instead of claret), parodies the Confederate *Manual of Arms* by offering many "hints" of his own to young campaigners, and pokes fun at Lincoln by dreaming up an occasion when he dines at the White House. The best arguments for Twain's authorship appear in Professor Ernest E. Leisy's introduction to *The Letters of Quintus Curtius Snodgrass*, Dallas, Southern Methodist University Press, 1946.

<sup>2</sup> This was published originally in the *New York Times*, Sunday, October 7, 1877, and has since appeared in *The Twainian*, March-April, 1954. The general outline of Twain's "campaign" as given in this speech follows rather closely that of the "Private History," but about half of the speech is given over to a detailing of Twain's difficulties with Ben Tupper, the Orderly Sergeant who refused to do anything that Twain, who was the Second Lieutenant, asked him to do. In the "Private History" Jo Bowers is Orderly Sergeant, and Tupper is not mentioned. Toward the close of his speech Twain says that "this is the first time that the deeds of those warriors [the outfit of which he was a member] have been brought officially to the notice of humanity."

3. A speech given by Twain at a dinner of Union Veterans in Baltimore in 1885.<sup>3</sup>
4. An anonymous account of Twain's war record which appeared in the Keokuk, Iowa, *Gate City*, January 17, 1885.<sup>4</sup>
5. A speech given by Twain at a banquet of ex-Confederate and Union soldiers in New York City, October, 1890.<sup>5</sup>
6. The story of Absalom Grimes.<sup>6</sup>
7. The story of Annie Moffet, Twain's niece.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>3</sup> "An Author's Soldiering," *Masterpieces of American Eloquence*, New York, The Christian Herald, 1900, pp. 438-440. Twain gives no complete account in this speech of his campaign but limits himself largely to the occasion when his company shot a stranger they took to be a Union soldier. He then compares the battle of Boonville, "fought nearby about the date of our slaughter" and the unrecorded battle in which he was engaged, fifteen men on one side and the stranger on the other. The point of his narrative is that his was the only battle in the history of the world in which "the opposing force WAS UTTERLY EXTERMINATED." He concludes, then, that it was a fortunate thing for the Union that he took his "shoulder out from under the Confederacy and let it come down," since the war would soon have been over had he gone on exterminating the opposing force every two weeks or so.

<sup>4</sup> This is a short account that roughly parallels the experience given in the "Private History" except that Twain is reported as having said that he quit the army because he could not stand riding a mule any longer and walking hurt his feet. The reminiscence concludes: "Thus because of a mule did the South lose a valiant soldier and the world gain an author, and should the house of Twain ever have an Escutcheon, what better emblem could be emblazoned upon it than a mule."

<sup>5</sup> "The Discounts of an Author," *Masterpieces of American Eloquence*, New York, The Christian Herald, 1900, pp. 428-430. Again Twain suggests that had he stayed in the Confederate Army, the war would have come to a quick end.

<sup>6</sup> *Absalom Grimes, Confederate Mail Runner*, M. M. Quaife, ed., New Haven, Yale University Press, 1926. See especially Chapter 1 entitled "Campaigning with Mark Twain." In 1910-11, Absalom Grimes partly wrote and partly dictated the narrative of his remarkable experiences during the Civil War. In this narrative, Grimes maintains that he was a member of Twain's outfit though Twain in the "Private History" indicates that he was not. Indeed Grimes makes himself out to be Twain's closest friend: with Will Bowen they quit piloting together because they refused to renew their licenses when required to take a new oath of allegiance, they were taken in custody together from Hannibal to St. Louis and ordered to pilot Union troop boats up the Missouri, they escaped together and helped organize a company of Hannibal volunteers. Grimes frequently called on Twain to make a speech, and he had Colonel Ralls, who swore in the company, present Twain with a sword that had been used in the War of 1812 and had previously been given to Grimes! Grimes, moreover, is responsible for various anecdotes picked up and presented as fact by Albert Bigelow Paine, Twain's official biographer: that Twain's mule waded across a river, instead of swimming it, with the result that Twain was totally immersed at the deepest point; that Twain suffered from a boil; that the company was routed by a woman with a hickory hoop-pole when they stopped at her house to ask for food; that someone set fire to the hay in a loft where the company was sleeping and that Twain jumped from the loft and sprained his ankle; that he spent several weeks recovering from his injury in Nuck Matson's farm-house while a little negro boy kept watch for Union detachments, and that when he left the Matsons he went to Keokuk to see his brother Orion. Some of Grimes's account is clearly inaccurate; much of it sounds more like old Southwestern yarn-spinning than history.

<sup>7</sup> *Mark Twain, Business Man*, Samuel C. Webster, ed., Boston, Little, Brown and Company, 1946. See especially Chapter 7 entitled "Border State Confusion." Twain stayed for a while with the Moffetts in St. Louis just before going north to Hannibal

8. Miscellaneous sources like notices of steamboat arrivals and departures, the records of the Polar Star Lodge Number Seventy-nine in St. Louis, Grant's *Memoirs*, the notebook of Mollie Clemens, and so on.

From all of these sources we can develop what can pass as a reasonably accurate account.

In the winter of 1860-61 Twain was apparently a member of the Louisiana Guard, a rather loosely organized militia unit in New Orleans. Although he may have participated in the "capture" of the Federal garrison at Baton Rouge — the garrison had agreed to surrender before the Guard arrived — his experience with the militia must have been slight since he was still an active pilot on the lower Mississippi. In April he went north as a passenger on the packet *Uncle Sam*, arriving in St. Louis on April 19, one week after the firing on Fort Sumter. From then until the middle of June he apparently spent most of his time in St. Louis, living chiefly with his mother and sister Pamela, who had married William A. Moffett. Shortly after June 12, when he is recorded as having passed the Fellow Craft degree in the Polar Star Lodge in St. Louis, he made the relatively short trip north to Hannibal where with a dozen or so of his old friends who were Confederate sympathizers he helped organize the "Marion Rangers." It is the campaign of this group that is described in the "Private History."

No two accounts of the activities of the Rangers, not even two of Twain's accounts, agree on anything more than these rough details: that the group organized secretly and slipped south into Ralls County where they were sworn in by Colonel Ralls of Mexican War fame, that the Confederate leader in the area was Thomas H. Harris, that Twain was a second lieutenant and rode a recalcitrant mule, that they moved westward into Monroe County and then returned to Ralls County, that the boys started off in a hilarious mood but that rumors of Union troops in their vicinity and a spell of rainy weather discouraged them badly, and that they disbanded before participating in any engagement. Twain was

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to join the Confederate forces. Annie Moffett was only eight at the time, and so her story is based upon childhood memories, buttressed undoubtedly by accounts she had heard or read. She testifies that Twain was so afraid that he would be arrested and forced to pilot a Federal gunboat that he would not remain for any length of time with the Moffetts while he was in St. Louis. Part of the time he visited his cousin James Lampton (whom he later used as a model for the famous Col. Sellers in *The Gilded Age*) and part of the time he hid out in the house of a family named Schroeter. All of this seems a little unlikely, for Twain was earning various degrees in Masonry during the same period and could hardly have been too fearful about being seen. Annie Moffett's account is best where she emphasizes the mixed feelings they all experienced. Of herself she confesses that she changed her allegiance "almost daily." On one occasion, she reports, Twain helped some boys make Confederate cockades and only shortly afterward became furiously angry with the same boys when they burned the Union flag. "I know he would gladly have given his life for his country, but he was a Southerner, his friends were all Southern, his sympathies were with the South." (p. 62.)

almost correct when he said, "We were the first men that went into the service in Missouri; we were the first that went out of it anywhere."<sup>8</sup>

When the group separated, Twain apparently made for the river and got passage back to St. Louis, for there on July 10 he was raised to the degree of Master Mason. A study of these dates indicates that he could not have spent at the most more than three weeks campaigning. He himself says that he spent only two weeks, and the smaller figure is probably more nearly correct.

In the meantime, Twain's older brother Orion, a staunch Unionist, had been appointed by President Lincoln the Secretary of the Nevada Territory. After some persuasion on Orion's part, Twain agreed to accompany him west and to supply some of the funds necessary for the trip. The two set out from St. Louis on July 18. Twain stayed in the West until December, 1866, or until long after hostilities ceased.

These are the bare facts of this period of Twain's life as well as we know them. It is hardly necessary to say that they have been interpreted in varying ways. He has been called an opportunist, a skulker, and a deserter. One of his biographers wrote, "There is no vestige of conviction in anything that he did in facing the war . . . He wanted to travel, to make money."<sup>9</sup> On the other hand, it has been pointed out that like many Missourians Twain's loyalties were divided and that he simply did what so many in the border states did: sat out the war, or retired from it after a brief experience. The most scholarly study of his war experience tends to exonerate him from the "deliberately base motive ascribed to him."<sup>10</sup>

The most recent public argument over Twain's war record boiled up briefly in 1940 just before the Post Office Department issued a commemorative stamp in Twain's honor. On January 25, Congressman Joseph B. Shannon of Missouri had this to say in the House of Representatives:

As I listened to the address yesterday by the gentleman from Connecticut I could not help but think of Mark Twain in connection with his service as a soldier during the Civil War.

Mark Twain ridiculed everything and everybody. One of the special objects of his derision was religion. As a young man he was sort of a tramp printer, going about from place to place. When the call to arms came, he was living in Hannibal. Col. Jack Burbridge, of Pike County, organized the Confederate forces in that portion of Missouri. A meeting was held at Hannibal for the purpose of enlisting men to fight for the Confederacy. The colonel took charge of the meeting, which was well attended. Among those who were there on that night was Mark Twain. Mark joined the forces and became a lieutenant.

<sup>8</sup> The 1877 speech in Hartford. Reprinted in *The Twainian*, March-April, 1954, p. 2.

<sup>9</sup> Edgar Lee Masters, *A Portrait of Mark Twain*, New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1938, pp. 34, 36.

<sup>10</sup> Fred W. Lorch, "Mark Twain and the 'Campaign That Failed,'" *American Literature*, XII (January, 1941), p. 470. I am much indebted to Professor Lorch's article for some of the facts presented here.



His company had no sooner organized, however, when a fighting Kentucky Democrat, Frank P. Blair, whose brother Montgomery Blair, was the Postmaster General in Lincoln's cabinet, organized four regiments in eastern Missouri, composed largely of the German population of St. Louis, and offered these regiments to the Union cause. These soldiers gave contest to Colonel Burbridge and his forces in northern Missouri. Colonel Burbridge met them, and so did Mark Twain — for a few minutes only. Mark Twain met them; and, as someone said, a Minié ball came whizzing past his ears, and he started running. He ran; and oh, how fast he did run. He never stopped until he got to Keokuk, Iowa. Colonel Burbridge fought 4 years in the Southern Army; Mark Twain about 4 minutes.

New London, Ralls County, Mo., was where Mark Twain took the oath of allegiance to the Confederacy. New London, Ralls County, Mo., was where he deserted. He was 26 years old when he took the oath. He was 26 years old when he deserted. It was all done in the year of our Lord 1861. "He walked right in, turned around, and he walked right out again."<sup>11</sup>

In reply to the Congressman, the *New York Times* in an editorial dated February 7, 1950, came to Twain's defense:

Representative Shannon of Blue Springs, Mo., took occasion of the issue of a commemorative stamp in honor of Mark Twain to stamp hard upon the military record of that most illustrious of Missourians. Mr. Shannon said that Mark, after his first battle, started to run and didn't stop until he got to Keokuk. This is humorous, not military history. Mark came up on the last boat from New Orleans to St. Louis in '61. The boat was fired upon on the way. As a pilot he had been watching the water, not political events, about which he then had neither interest nor concern.

If he was 26, mentally he was not yet 21. Judging by the number of Missouri troops that served in the War between the States, Missouri was damned Yankee by more than 2 to 1. At Hannibal he found that military companies were being formed to support Governor Jackson, strong for the Confederacy. "In a secret place at night" Mark and fourteen others, some graduates of Tom Sawyer's gang of pirates, formed a battalion called the Marion Regiment (after the county, not the General). There was a captain but no first lieutenant; and young Clemens was second lieutenant. A romantic fellow named Dunlap had named the battalion.

The battalion camped on Salt River. We see Lieutenant Clemens asleep on picket duty in the sun. We see the hungry warriors happy at a hot breakfast; at another farmhouse, sullen because grub is denied them as "secesh." A ranger is indiscreet enough to smoke in a barn where the battalion is quartered. Lieu-

<sup>11</sup> *Congressional Record*, Vol. 86, Part 1 (January 25, 1940), p. 698. Representative Shannon, of course, has some of his facts wrong: Twain was not living in Hannibal when the call came; he was not in an engagement; the Union troops in the vicinity of Hannibal and Florida at the time of Twain's soldiering were probably Illinois detachments rather than Frank Blair's St. Louis regiment; and Twain did not run or propel himself in any other fashion toward Keokuk but went south to St. Louis. Anyone wanting to be completely pernickety can also point out that Twain was twenty-five, not twenty-six.

tenant Clemens tumbles out of a hay loft and sprains his ankle. He stays some weeks in a farm house till the ankle is mended.

Will Mr. Shannon kindly take notice that the lieutenant walked, not ran, to Keokuk. Whether the desertion was anything more than technical, one doesn't know or care. On both sides that war was singularly rich in desertions. Lieutenant Clemens might have been killed instead of completing his education. So we praise his absquatulation as we do Horace for abandoning his shield.<sup>12</sup>

The more one reads "The Private History of a Campaign That Failed" the more he must conclude that it is primarily a literary rather than an historical document. The pattern of action is precisely the pattern which recurs repeatedly in *Huckleberry Finn* — which Twain had finished just one year before. In each major episode of *Huckleberry Finn*, Huck gets into a series of scrapes of increasing complexity and annoyance until finally when matters reach a climax and he can't stand it any longer, he "lights out." In the "Private History" Huck becomes Twain but the formula remains the same. Twain tells of the initial skylarking, then the series of petty annoyances, the squabbles and the bad weather, the increasing fear of Union troops, and finally the killing of the stranger who is assumed to be a Union soldier in civilian clothes. Although there are a few details which follow, it is the killing that is the climax of the story and the event which Twain uses to give the account coherence and dramatic effect. It is interesting to note that in his 1877 speech he does not mention killing anyone. In the 1885 speech, though he mentioned that a man was killed, he does not indicate that he personally fired upon him. Furthermore, far from investing the incident with the pathos it carries in the "Private History," he uses the killing as a basis for his main joke!<sup>13</sup> Absalom Grimes, who certainly spared no pains to make his account sensational, has a gray mare shot in the dark but no man. It seems clear, then, that Twain in the "Private History" is more interested in literary effect than he is in historical accuracy.<sup>14</sup> He uses a pattern of action that is familiar to him, inventing and manipulating his details to get the same effect he achieved so well in the various episodes of *Huckleberry Finn*. Like Huck he might have added, "And so when I couldn't stand it no longer I lit out."

The characters in the "History" strengthen the impression that the story is more of a piece with Twain's fiction than it is with the facts of his life.

<sup>12</sup> An editorial entitled "Ranger of Hannibal," *New York Times* (February 7, 1940), p. 20. Having followed the Paine biography, the *Times* editor unwittingly helps to perpetuate several legends: that Mark came up on the last boat from New Orleans, that it was fired upon, that he spent weeks in a farmhouse recovering from a sprained ankle.

<sup>13</sup> See footnote 3.

<sup>14</sup> A. B. Paine says that the incident of killing the stranger was invented by Twain (*Mark Twain, A Biography*, New York, Harper and Brothers, 1912, p. 169). Though Paine is not always reliable, the weight of the evidence seems to indicate that in this assertion he is correct.

With the possible exception of Tom Lyman, the captain, Twain and his cohorts all seem more like boys in their teens than they do like men in their mid-twenties.<sup>15</sup> Indeed Twain himself almost always refers to them as boys. They react to danger like juveniles hiding from their elders; they refuse to accept adult responsibility; they are incredibly naive about war and the nature of armies; they play games and fall into boyish arguments and fights; they debate about the direction they should retreat and agree solemnly that they should not retreat *toward* the enemy; and they all talk exactly like Tom Sawyer. Change the names and they would be Tom Sawyer's gang out on another adventure cooked up by Tom's fertile imagination.

Since the characters do appear so young, their antics seem like the lusty buffoonery of the innocent rather than the irresponsible silliness of men who are old enough to know better. Twain had experimented successfully in lowering his age in another semi-autobiographical work, *Life on the Mississippi*. Where in it he describes his experiences as an apprentice pilot he plays the role of an incredibly naive youth, though he was in fact a young man of twenty-two. The reader laughs at him but loves him all the more because of his youth. Something of the same is true in the "Private History" where there are ludicrous happenings by the score, but they exist largely because a boys' world has been superimposed upon the world of adult affairs. This is not really a story of Confederate and Union forces, but of boys and men. And as is always true with a Twain story, the reader soon finds himself on the side of the boys. He remains understanding and tolerant. He can feel superior without being contemptuous. And most of all, for Twain's purpose, he finds himself accepting the fact of desertion. For in the end it is a boy who "lights out" and not a man.

Despite the many fictional aspects of the "Private History" the work is still a highly personal document, more personal probably than it would have been had Twain carefully recorded each event just as it happened. It is in effect, an explanation and an apology. Twain submits at least three reasons for his desertion. First, like others in the border states he had mixed loyalties. Second, like others in the early militia groups he lacked training and discipline. These are reasons which he states explicitly at the beginning and at the end. They are sound reasons and undoubtedly applied in his case, but they are not made nearly so emotionally compelling as the third reason, which is that he was a boy and was cut out more "for a child's nurse" than for the awful business of war. The killing of the stranger was more than he could bear, and shortly after it occurred he left his outfit. If the incident of the killing is a fabrication, as most Twain scholars think it is, it suggests only that much more the force of the com-

<sup>15</sup> E. W. Kemble, the illustrator, must have been struck also with the youthful quality of the characters since he pictures them as hardly older than the boys he drew for *Huckleberry Finn*.

pulsion in Twain to justify his act, to show that what he did was not only common but that in terms of his own character it was *right*.

The question, of course, arises why such an attempt at self-vindication would seem necessary to Twain as late as 1885. The answer may well lie in two trips back to Hannibal in 1882 and 1885 when he was most likely to meet with those who knew his war record and would comment upon it. In the spring of 1882 he left his home in Hartford, Connecticut, for a trip down the Mississippi to New Orleans and up again as far as St. Paul. Three days were spent in Hannibal. In the winter of 1885-86 he again went west, this time on a lecture tour with George Washington Cable. Stops along the Mississippi included St. Louis, Hannibal, and Keokuk, where his mother was living with Orion and where an anonymus account of his War experience appeared in the *Gate City* either the day he left town or the day after.<sup>16</sup> Between the two trips he completed *Life on the Mississippi* and *Huckleberry Finn*. In the three years preceding the writing of the "Private History", therefore, Twain was living much of the time either in actuality or in his imagination in the place where he was a soldier. If his conscience was ever to drive him into an *apologia*, 1885 would seem to be the most likely year.

Comparisons of the "Private History" with Stephen Crane's *The Red Badge of Courage* are inevitable. Both authors refract the general experience of going to war through the mind of a young recruit; both suggest the vacillations between fear and light-heartedness, the exaggerated notions of the enemy, the jar of discovery when reality does not square with romantic dreams, the horror of death. But Crane is in control of his material throughout. His story drives ahead remorselessly until the tension in the mind of the young recruit is almost unbearable. Then with devastating irony Crane allows the boy to relax and to find status with his fellows because of his bogus "badge of courage." Twain's narrative has neither the unity of Crane's, nor its intensity of effect. Caught between the urge to exculpate himself and the irrepressible impulse to play once again the role of the inspired idiot, Twain produces a piece in which the parts fail to fuse. His insights into the life of a young and bewildered recruit get smothered by both the farce and the argument. But the narrative is not without merit. In its variety there is richness, and in its very uncertainty it reveals with considerable poignancy a sensitive spirit still floundering morally in the backwash of the war.

Except for a few minor stylistic changes, the text used here is the original one published in the *Century Magazine*, XXXI (December, 1885), pp. 193-204. After its publication in the *Century*, "The Private History" was printed in 1892 by Charles L. Webster & Co., Twain's own

<sup>16</sup> See footnote 4. Professor Lorch suggests that Twain may have written the "Private History" because he sensed danger in allowing the *Gate City* version to go unchecked. *Op. cit.*, p. 464.

publishing house, as part of a little volume entitled *Merry Tales*. More recently it has appeared in the widely sold editions (e.g., Author's National, Collier, Stormfield) as part of the volume entitled *The American Claimant Etc.* The book versions do not differ substantially from the original *Century* text.

### *The Private History of a Campaign That Failed*

YOU HAVE HEARD FROM a great many people who did something in the war; <sup>17</sup> is it not fair and right that you listen a little moment to one who started out to do something in it, but didn't? Thousands entered the war, got just a taste of it, and then stepped out again permanently. These, by their very numbers, are respectable, and are therefore entitled to a sort of voice — not a loud one, but a modest one; not a boastful one, but an apologetic one. They ought not to be allowed much space among better people — people who did something. I grant that; but they ought at least to be allowed to state why they didn't do anything, and also to explain the process by which they didn't do anything. Surely this kind of light must have a sort of value.

Out West there was a good deal of confusion in men's minds during the first months of the great trouble — a good deal of unsettledness, of leaning first this way, then that, then the other way. It was hard for us to get our bearings. I call to mind an instance of this. I was piloting on the Mississippi when the news came that South Carolina had gone out of the Union on the 20th of December, 1860. My pilot mate was a New-Yorker. He was strong for the Union; so was I. But he would not listen to me with any patience; my loyalty was smirched, to his eye, because my father had owned slaves. I said, in palliation of this dark fact, that I had heard my father say, some years before he died, that slavery was a great wrong, and that he would free the solitary negro he then owned if he could think it right to give away the property of the family when he was so straitened in means. My mate retorted that a mere impulse was nothing — anybody could pretend to a good impulse; and went on decrying my Unionism and libeling my ancestry. A month later the secession atmosphere had considerably thickened on the Lower Mississippi, and I became a rebel; so did he. We were together in New Orleans the 26th of January, when Louisiana went out of the Union. He did his full

<sup>17</sup> Twain was not simply indulging in easy rhetoric when he refers to "a great many people." In the seventies and eighties an astonishing amount of space in American magazines was given over to Civil War accounts and memoirs. In 1885, the year that the "Private History" appeared, the *Century Magazine* alone published over forty articles on Civil War battles and leaders. Among the authors of these articles were Generals Ulysses S. Grant, George B. McClellan, James Longstreet, Joseph E. Johnston, Wm. F. Smith, Lew Wallace, Robert E. Patterson, Fitz John Porter, D. H. Hill, and Adam Badeau.



share of the rebel shouting, but was bitterly opposed to letting me do mine. He said that I came of bad stock — of a father who had been willing to set slaves free. In the following summer he was piloting a Federal gunboat and shouting for the Union again, and I was in the Confederate army. I held his note for some borrowed money. He was one of the most upright men I ever knew, but he repudiated that note without hesitation because I was a rebel and the son of a man who owned slaves.

In that summer — of 1861 — the first wash of the wave of war broke upon the shores of Missouri. Our state was invaded by the Union forces. They took possession of St. Louis, Jefferson Barracks, and some other points. The Governor, Claib Jackson, issued his proclamation calling out fifty thousand militia to repel the invader.

I was visiting in the small town where my boyhood had been spent — Hannibal, Marion County. Several of us got together in a secret place by night and formed ourselves into a military company.<sup>18</sup> One Tom Lyman, a young fellow of a good deal of spirit but of no military experience, was made captain; I was made second lieutenant. We had no first lieutenant; I do not know why; it was long ago. There were fifteen of us. By the advice of an innocent connected with the organization we called ourselves the Marion Rangers. I do not remember that any one found fault with the name. I did not; I thought it sounded quite well. The young fellow who proposed this title was perhaps a fair sample of the kind of stuff we were made of. He was young, ignorant, good-natured, well-meaning, trivial, full of romance, and given to reading chivalric novels and singing forlorn love-ditties. He had some pathetic little nickel-plated aristocratic instincts, and detested his name, which was Dunlap; detested it, partly because it was nearly as common in that region as Smith, but mainly because it had a plebeian sound to his ear. So he tried to ennoble it by writing it in this way: *dUnlap*. That contented his eye, but left his ear unsatisfied, for people gave the new name the same old pronunciation — emphasis on the front end of it. He then did the bravest thing that can be imagined — a thing to make one shiver when one remembers how the world is given to resenting shams and affectations; he began to write his name so: *dUn Lap*. And he waited patiently through the long storm of mud that was flung at this work of art, and he had his reward at last; for he lived to see that name accepted, and the emphasis put where he wanted it by people who had known him all his life, and to whom the tribe of Dunlaps had been as familiar as the rain and the sunshine for forty years. So sure of victory at last is the courage that can wait. He said he had

<sup>18</sup> Twain could not have been visiting in Hannibal when Governor Jackson issued his proclamation because the proclamation was issued on the same date, June 12, that Twain took his second degree in Masonry in St. Louis. By the time he arrived in Hannibal the town was controlled by three companies of Union Home Guards. This fact explains the secrecy and the quick departure of the "company" for Ralls County, which was still something of a no-man's land.



found, by consulting some ancient French chronicles, that the name was rightly and originally written d'Un Lap; and said that if it were translated into English it would mean Peterson: *Lap*, Latin or Greek, he said, for stone or rock, same as the French *pierre*, that is to say, Peter: *d'* of or from; *un*, a or one; hence, d'un Lap, of or from a stone or a Peter; that is to say, one who is the son of a stone, the son of a Peter — Peterson. Our militia company were not learned, and the explanation confused them; so they called him Peterson Dunlap. He proved useful to us in his way; he named our camps for us, and he generally struck a name that was "no slouch," as the boys said.

That is one sample of us. Another was Ed Stevens, son of the town jeweler — trim-built, handsome, graceful, neat as a cat; bright, educated, but given over entirely to fun. There was nothing serious in life to him. As far as he was concerned, this military expedition of ours was simply a holiday. I should say that about half of us looked upon it in the same way; not consciously, perhaps, but unconsciously. We did not think; we were not capable of it. As for myself, I was full of unreasoning joy to be done with turning out of bed at midnight and four in the morning for a while; grateful to have a change, new scenes, new occupations, a new interest.<sup>19</sup> In my thoughts that was as far as I went; I did not go into the details; as a rule, one doesn't at twenty-four.<sup>20</sup>

Another sample was Smith, the blacksmith's apprentice. This vast donkey had some pluck, of a slow and sluggish nature, but a soft heart; at one time he would knock a horse down for some impropriety, and at another he would get homesick and cry. However, he had one ultimate credit to his account which some of us hadn't; he stuck to the war and was killed in battle at last.

Jo Bowers, another sample, was a huge, good-natured, flax-headed lubber; lazy, sentimental, full of harmless brag, a grumbler by nature; an experienced, industrious, ambitious, and often quite picturesque liar, and yet not a successful one, for he had had no intelligent training, but was allowed to come up just any way. This life was serious enough to him, and seldom satisfactory. But he was a good fellow, anyway, and the boys all liked him. He was made orderly sergeant; Stevens was made corporal.

These samples will answer — and they are quite fair ones. Well, this herd of cattle started for the war. What could you expect of them? They did as well as they knew how; but, really, what was justly to be expected of them? Nothing, I should say. That is what they did.

We waited for a dark night, for caution and secrecy were necessary; then, toward midnight, we stole in couples and from various directions to the Griffith place, beyond the town; from that point we set out together

<sup>19</sup> Twain hardly turned to soldiering to escape the routine of pilot life since he had been off the river for over two months.

<sup>20</sup> Born November 30, 1835, Twain was closer to twenty-six than to twenty-four.

on foot. Hannibal lies at the extreme southeastern corner of Marion County, on the Mississippi River; our objective point was the hamlet of New London, ten miles away, in Ralls County.

The first hour was all fun, idle nonsense and laughter. But that could not be kept up. The steady trudging came to be like work; the play had somehow oozed out of it; the stillness of the woods and the somberness of the night began to throw a depressing influence over the spirits of the boys, and presently the talking died out and each person shut himself up in his own thoughts. During the last half of the second hour nobody said a word.

Now we approached a log farm-house where, according to report, there was a guard of five Union soldiers. Lyman called a halt; and there, in the deep gloom of the overhanging branches, he began to whisper a plan of assault upon that house, which made the gloom more depressing than it was before. It was a crucial moment; we realized, with a cold suddenness, that here was no jest — we were standing face to face with actual war. We were equal to the occasion. In our response there was no hesitation, no indecision: we said that if Lyman wanted to meddle with those soldiers, he could go ahead and do it; but if he waited for us to follow, he would wait a long time.

Lyman urged, pleaded, tried to shame us, but it had no effect. Our course was plain, our minds were made up: we would flank the farm-house — go out around. And that was what we did.

We struck into the woods and entered upon a rough time, stumbling over roots, getting tangled in vines, and torn by briars. At last we reached an open place in a safe region, and sat down, blown and hot, to cool off and nurse our scratches and bruises. Lyman was annoyed, but the rest of us were cheerful; we had flanked the farmhouse, we had made our first military movement, and it was a success; we had nothing to fret about, we were feeling just the other way. Horse-play and laughing began again; the expedition was become a holiday frolic once more.

Then we had two more hours of dull trudging and ultimate silence and depression; then, about dawn, we straggled into New London, soiled, heel-blistered, fagged with our little march, and all of us except Stevens in a sour and raspy humor and privately down on the war. We stacked our shabby old shotguns in Colonel Ralls's barn, and then went in a body and breakfasted with that veteran of the Mexican War. Afterward he took us to a distant meadow, and there in the shade of a tree we listened to an old-fashioned speech from him, full of gunpowder and glory, full of that adjective-piling, mixed metaphor and windy declamation which were regarded as eloquence in that ancient time and that remote region; and then he swore us on the Bible to be faithful to the State of Missouri and drive all invaders from her soil, no matter whence they might come or under what flag they might march. This mixed us considerably, and we could not make out just what service we were embarked in; but Colonel

Ralls, the practised politician and phrase-juggler, was not similarly in doubt; he knew quite clearly that he had invested us in the cause of the Southern Confederacy. He closed the solemnities by belting around me the sword which his neighbor, Colonel Brown, had worn at Buena Vista and Molino del Rey; and he accompanied this act with another impressive blast.

Then we formed in line of battle and marched four miles to a shady and pleasant piece of woods on the border of the far-reaching expanses of a flowery prairie. It was an enchanting region for war — our kind of war.

We pierced the forest about half a mile, and took up a strong position, with some low, rocky, and wooded hills behind us, and a purling, limpid creek in front. Straightway half the command were in swimming and the other half fishing. The ass with the French name gave this position a romantic title, but it was too long, so the boys shortened and simplified it to Camp Ralls.

We occupied an old maple-sugar camp, whose half-rotted troughs were still propped against the trees. A long corncrib served for sleeping-quarters for the battalion. On our left, half a mile away, were Mason's farm and house; and he was a friend to the cause. Shortly after noon the farmers began to arrive from several directions, with mules and horses for our use, and these they lent us for as long as the war might last, which they judged would be about three months. The animals were of all sizes, all colors, and all breeds. They were mainly young and frisky, and nobody in the command could stay on them long at a time; for we were town boys, and ignorant of horsemanship. The creature that fell to my share was a very small mule, and yet so quick and active that it could throw me without difficulty; and it did this whenever I got on it. Then it would bray — stretching its neck out, laying its ears back, and spreading its jaws till you could see down to its works. It was a disagreeable animal in every way. If I took it by the bridle and tried to lead it off the grounds, it would sit down and brace back, and no one could budge it. However, I was not entirely destitute of military resources, and I did presently manage to spoil this game; for I had seen many a steamboat aground in my time, and knew a trick or two which even a grounded mule would be obliged to respect. There was a well by the corncrib; so I substituted thirty fathom of rope for the bridle, and fetched him home with the windlass.

I will anticipate here sufficiently to say that we did learn to ride, after some days' practice, but never well. We could not learn to like our animals; they were not choice ones, and most of them had annoying peculiarities of one kind or another. Stevens's horse would carry him, when he was not noticing, under the huge excrescences which form on the trunks of oak trees, and wipe him out of the saddle; in this way Stevens got several bad hurts. Sergeant Bowers's horse was very large and tall,

with slim, long legs, and looked like a railroad bridge. His size enabled him to reach all about, and as far as he wanted to, with his head; so he was always biting Bowers's legs. On the march, in the sun, Bowers slept a good deal; and as soon as the horse recognized that he was asleep he would reach around and bite him on the leg. His legs were black and blue with bites. This was the only thing that could ever make him swear, but this always did; whenever his horse bit him he always swore, and of course Stevens, who laughed at everything, laughed at this, and would even get into such convulsions over it as to lose his balance and fall off his horse; and then Bowers, already irritated by the pain of the horse-bite, would resent the laughter with hard language, and there would be a quarrel; so that horse made no end of trouble and bad blood in the command.

However, I will get back to where I was — our first afternoon in the sugar-camp. The sugar-troughs came very handy as horse-troughs, and we had plenty of corn to fill them with. I ordered Sergeant Bowers to feed my mule; but he said that if I reckoned he went to war to be a dry-nurse to a mule it wouldn't take me very long to find out my mistake. I believed that this was insubordination, but I was full of uncertainties about everything military, and so I let the thing pass, and went and ordered Smith, the blacksmith's apprentice, to feed the mule; but he merely gave me a large, cold, sarcastic grin, such as an ostensibly seven-year-old horse gives you when you lift his lip and find he is fourteen, and turned his back on me. I then went to the captain, and asked if it were not right and proper and military for me to have an orderly. He said it was, but as there was only one orderly in the corps, it was but right that he himself should have Bowers on his staff. Bowers said he wouldn't serve on anybody's staff; and if anybody thought he could make him, let him try it. So, of course, the thing had to be dropped; there was no other way.

Next, nobody would cook; it was considered a degradation; so we had no dinner. We lazed the rest of the pleasant afternoon away, some dozing under the trees, some smoking cob-pipes and talking sweethearts and war, some playing games. By late supper-time all hands were famished; and to meet the difficulty all hands turned to, on an equal footing, and gathered wood, built fires, and cooked the meal. Afterward everything was smooth for a while; then trouble broke out between the corporal and the sergeant, each claiming to rank the other. Nobody knew which was the higher office; so Lyman had to settle the matter by making the rank of both officers equal. The commander of an ignorant crew like that has many troubles and vexations which probably do not occur in the regular army at all. However, with the song-singing and yarn-spinning around the campfire, everything presently became serene again; and by and by we raked the corn down level in one end of the crib, and all

went to bed on it, tying a horse to the door, so that he would neigh if any one tried to get in.\*

We had some horsemanship drill every forenoon; then, afternoons, we rode off here and there in squads a few miles, and visited the farmers' girls, and had a youthful good time, and got an honest good dinner or supper, and then home again to camp, happy and content.

For a time life was idly delicious, it was perfect; there was nothing to mar it. Then came some farmers with an alarm one day. They said it was rumored that the enemy were advancing in our direction from over Hyde's prairie. The result was a sharp stir among us, and general consternation. It was a rude awakening from our pleasant trance. The rumor was but a rumor — nothing definite about it; so, in the confusion, we did not know which way to retreat. Lyman was for not retreating at all in these uncertain circumstances; but he found that if he tried to maintain that attitude he would fare badly, for the command were in no humor to put up with insubordination. So he yielded the point and called a council of war — to consist of himself and the three other officers; but the privates made such a fuss about being left out that we had to allow them to be present, I mean we had to allow them to remain, for they were already present, and doing the most of the talking, too. The question was, which way to retreat; but all were so flurried that nobody seemed to have even a guess to offer. Except Lyman. He explained in a few calm words that, inasmuch as the enemy were approaching from over Hyde's prairie, our course was simple: all we had to do was not to retreat *toward* him; any other direction would answer our needs perfectly. Everybody saw in a moment how true this was, and how wise; so Lyman got a great many compliments. It was now decided that we should fall back on Mason's farm.

It was after dark by this time, and as we could not know how soon the enemy might arrive, it did not seem best to try to take the horses and things with us; so we only took the guns and ammunition, and started at once. The route was very rough and hilly and rocky, and presently the night grew very black and rain began to fall; so we had a troublesome time of it, struggling and stumbling along in the dark; and soon some person slipped and fell, and then the next person behind stumbled over him and fell, and so did the rest, one after the other; and then Bowers came, with the keg of powder in his arms, while the command were all

\*It was always my impression that that was what the horse was there for, and I know that it was also the impression of at least one other of the command, for we talked about it at the time, and admired the military ingenuity of the device; but when I was out West, three years ago, I was told by Mr. A. G. Fuqua, a member of our company, that the horse was his; that the leaving him tied at the door was a matter of mere forgetfulness, and that to attribute it to intelligent invention was to give him quite too much credit. In support of his position he called my attention to the suggestive fact that the artifice was not employed again. I had not thought of that before. [Twain's note]



mixed together, arms and legs, on the muddy slope; and so he fell, of course, with the keg, and this started the whole detachment down the hill in a body, and they landed in the brook at the bottom in a pile, and each that was undermost pulling the hair and scratching and biting those that were on top of him; and those that were being scratched and bitten scratching and biting the rest in their turn, and all saying they would die before they would ever go to war again if they ever got out of this brook this time, and the invader might rot for all they cared, and the country along with him — and all such talk as that, which was dismal to hear and take part in, in such smothered, low voices, and such a grisly dark place and so wet, and the enemy, maybe, coming any moment.

The keg of powder was lost, and the guns, too; so the growling and complaining continued straight along while the brigade pawed around the pasty hillside and slopped around in the brook hunting for these things; consequently we lost considerable time at this; and then we heard a sound, and held our breath and listened, and it seemed to be the enemy coming, though it could have been a cow, for it had a cough like a cow; but we did not wait, but left a couple of guns behind and struck out for Mason's again as briskly as we could scramble along in the dark. But we got lost presently among the rugged little ravines, and wasted a deal of time finding the way again, so it was after nine when we reached Mason's stile at last; and then before we could open our mouths to give the countersign several dogs came bounding over the fence, with great riot and noise, and each of them took a soldier by the slack of his trousers and began to back away with him. We could not shoot the dogs without endangering the persons they were attached to; so we had to look on helpless at what was perhaps the most mortifying spectacle of the Civil War. There was light enough, and to spare, for the Masons had now run out on the porch with candles in their hands. The old man and his son came and undid the dogs without difficulty, all but Bowers's; but they couldn't undo his dog, they didn't know his combination; he was of the bull kind, and seemed to be set with a Yale time-lock; but they got him loose at last with some scalding water, of which Bowers got his share and returned thanks. Peterson Dunlap afterward made up a fine name for this engagement, and also for the night march which preceded it, but both have long ago faded out of my memory.

We now went into the house, and they began to ask us a world of questions, whereby it presently came out that we did not know anything concerning who or what we were running from; so the old gentleman made himself very frank, and said we were a curious breed of soldiers, and guessed we could be depended on to end up the war in time, because no government could stand the expense of the shoe-leather we should cost it trying to follow us around. "Marion *Rangers*! good name, b'gosh!" said he. And wanted to know why we hadn't had a picketguard at the place where the road entered the prairie, and why we hadn't sent out a



scouting party to spy out the enemy and bring us an account of his strength, and so on, before jumping up and stampeding out of a strong position upon a mere vague rumor — and so on and so forth, till he made us all feel shabbier than the dogs had done, not half so enthusiastically welcome. So we went to bed shamed and low-spirited; except Stevens. Soon Stevens began to devise a garment for Bowers which could be made to automatically display his battlescars to the grateful, or conceal them from the envious, according to his occasions; but Bowers was in no humor for this, so there was a fight, and when it was over Stevens had some battle-scars of his own to think about.

Then we got a little sleep. But after all we had gone through, our activities were not over for the night; for about two o'clock in the morning we heard a shout of warning from down the lane, accompanied by a chorus from all the dogs, and in a moment everybody was up and flying around to find out what the alarm was about. The alarmist was a horseman who gave notice that a detachment of Union soldiers was on its way from Hannibal with orders to capture and hang any bands like ours which it could find, and said we had no time to lose. Farmer Mason was in a flurry this time himself. He hurried us out of the house with all haste, and sent one of his negroes with us to show us where to hide ourselves and our telltale guns along the ravines half a mile away. It was raining heavily.

We struck down the lane, then across some rocky pasture-land which offered good advantages for stumbling; consequently we were down in the mud most of the time, and every time a man went down he black-guarded the war, and the people that started it, and everybody connected with it, and gave himself the master dose of all for being so foolish as to go into it. At last we reached the wooded mouth of a ravine, and there we huddled ourselves under the streaming trees, and sent the negro back home. It was a dismal and heart-breaking time. We were like to be drowned with rain, deafened with the howling wind and the booming thunder, and blinded by the lightning. It was, indeed, a wild night. The drenching we were getting was misery enough, but a deeper misery still was the reflection that the halter might end us before we were a day older. A death of this shameful sort had not occurred to us as being among the possibilities of war. It took the romance all out of the campaign, and turned our dreams of glory into a repulsive nightmare. As for doubting that so barbarous an order had been given, not one of us did that.

The long night wore itself out at last, and then the negro came to us with the news that the alarm had manifestly been a false one, and that breakfast would soon be ready. Straightway we were light-hearted again, and the world was bright, and life as full of hope and promise as ever — for we were young then. How long ago that was! Twenty-four years.

The mongrel child of philology named the night's refuge Camp De-

vastation, and no soul objected. The Masons gave us a Missouri country breakfast, in Missourian abundance, and we needed it: hot biscuits; hot "wheat bread," prettily criss-crossed in a lattice pattern on top; hot corn-pone; fried chicken; bacon, coffee, eggs, milk, buttermilk, etc.; and the world may be confidently challenged to furnish the equal of such a breakfast, as it is cooked in the South.

We stayed several days at Mason's; and after all these years the memory of the dullness, and stillness, and lifelessness of that slumberous farm-house still oppresses my spirit as with a sense of the presence of death and mourning. There was nothing to do, nothing to think about; there was no interest in life. The male part of the household were away in the fields all day, the women were busy and out of our sight; there was no sound but the plaintive wailing of a spinning-wheel, forever moaning out from some distant room — the most lonesome sound in nature, a sound steeped and sodden with homesickness and the emptiness of life. The family went to bed about dark every night, and as we were not invited to intrude any new customs we naturally followed theirs. Those nights were a hundred years long to youths accustomed to being up till twelve. We lay awake and miserable till that hour every time, and grew old and decrepit waiting through the still eternities for the clock-strikes. This was no place for town boys. So at last it was with something very like joy that we received news that the enemy were on our track again. With a new birth of the old warrior spirit we sprang to our places in line of battle and fell back on Camp Ralls.

Captain Lyman had taken a hint from Mason's talk, and he now gave orders that our camp should be guarded against surprise by the posting of pickets. I was ordered to place a picket at the forks of the road in Hyde's prairie. Night shut down black and threatening. I told Sergeant Bowers to go out to that place and stay till midnight; and, just as I was expecting, he said he wouldn't do it. I tried to get others to go, but all refused. Some excused themselves on account of the weather; but the rest were frank enough to say they wouldn't go in any kind of weather. This kind of thing sounds odd now, and impossible, but there was no surprise in it at the time. On the contrary, it seemed a perfectly natural thing to do. There were scores of little camps scattered over Missouri where the same thing was happening. These camps were composed of young men who had been born and reared to a sturdy independence, and who did not know what it meant to be ordered around by Tom, Dick, and Harry, whom they had known familiarly all their lives, in the village or on the farm. It is quite within the probabilities that this same thing was happening all over the South. James Redpath<sup>21</sup> recognized the justice of this assumption, and furnished the following instance in support of it.

<sup>21</sup> James Redpath, the foremost lecture agent of the day, arranged many of Twain's lecture tours.

During a short stay in East Tennessee he was in a citizen colonel's tent one day talking, when a big private appeared at the door, and, without salute or other circumlocution, said to the colonel:

"Say, Jim, I'm a-goin' home for a few days."

"What for?"

"Well, I hain't b'en there for a right smart while, and I'd like to see how things is comin' on."

"How long are you going to be gone?"

"'Bout two weeks."

"Well, don't be gone longer than that; and get back sooner if you can."

That was all, and the citizen officer resumed his conversation where the private had broken it off. This was in the first months of the war, of course. The camps in our part of Missouri were under Brigadier-General Thomas H. Harris. He was a townsman of ours, a first-rate fellow, and well liked; but we had all familiarly known him as the sole and modest-salaried operator in our telegraph office, where he had to send about one despatch a week in ordinary times, and two when there was a rush of business; consequently, when he appeared in our midst one day, on the wing, and delivered a military command of some sort, in a large military fashion, nobody was surprised at the response which he got from the assembled soldiery:

"Oh, now, what'll you take to *don't*, Tom Harris?"

It was quite the natural thing. One might justly imagine that we were hopeless material for war. And so we seemed, in our ignorant state; but there were those among us who afterward learned the grim trade; learned to obey like machines; became valuable soldiers; fought all through the war, and came out at the end with excellent records. One of the very boys who refused to go out on picket duty that night, and called me an ass for thinking he would expose himself to danger in such a fool-hardy way, had become distinguished for intrepidity before he was a year older.

I did secure my picket that night — not by authority, but by diplomacy. I got Bowers to go by agreeing to exchange ranks with him for the time being, and go along and stand the watch with him as his subordinate. We stayed out there a couple of dreary hours in the pitchy darkness and the rain, with nothing to modify the dreariness but Bowers's monotonous growlings at the war and the weather; then we began to nod, and presently found it next to impossible to stay in the saddle; so we gave up the tedious job, and went back to the camp without waiting for the relief guard. We rode into camp without interruption or objection from anybody, and the enemy could have done the same, for there were no sentries. Everybody was asleep; at midnight there was nobody to send out another picket, so none was sent. We never tried to establish a watch

at night again, as far as I remember, but we generally kept a picket out in the daytime.

In that camp the whole command slept on the corn in the big corn-crib; and there was usually a general row before morning, for the place was full of rats, and they would scramble over the boys' bodies and faces, annoying and irritating everybody; and now and then they would bite some one's toe, and the person who owned the toe would start up and magnify his English and begin to throw corn in the dark. The ears were half as heavy as bricks, and when they struck they hurt. The persons struck would respond, and inside of five minutes every man would be locked in a death-grip with his neighbor. There was grievous deal of blood shed in the corn-crib, but this was all that was spilt while I was in the war. No, that is not quite true. But for one circumstance it would have been all. I will come to that now.

Our scares were frequent. Every few days rumors would come that the enemy were approaching. In these cases we always fell back on some other camp of ours; we never stayed where we were. But the rumors always turned out to be false; so at last even we began to grow indifferent to them. One night a negro was sent to our corn-crib with the same old warning: the enemy was hovering in the neighborhood. We all said let him hover. We resolved to stay still and be comfortable. It was a fine warlike resolution, and no doubt we all felt the stir of it in our veins — for a moment. We had been having a very jolly time, that was full of horse-play and schoolboy hilarity; but that cooled down now, and presently the fast-waning fire of forced jokes and forced laughs died out altogether, and the company became silent. Silent and nervous. And soon uneasy — worried — apprehensive. We had said we would stay, and we were committed. We could have been persuaded to go, but there was nobody brave enough to suggest it. An almost noiseless movement presently began in the dark by a general but unvoiced impulse. When the movement was completed each man knew that he was not the only person who had crept to the front wall and had his eye at a crack between the logs. No, we were all there; all there with our hearts in our throats, and staring out toward the sugar-troughs where the forest foot-path came through. It was late, and there was a deep woodsy stillness everywhere. There was a veiled moonlight, which was only just strong enough to enable us to mark the general shape of objects. Presently a muffled sound caught our ears, and we recognized it as the hoof-beats of a horse or horses. And right away a figure appeared in the forest path; it could have been made of smoke, its mass had so little sharpness of outline. It was a man on horseback, and it seemed to me that there were others behind him. I got hold of a gun in the dark, and pushed it through a crack between the logs, hardly knowing what I was doing, I was so dazed with fright. Somebody said "Fire!" I pulled the trigger. I seemed to see a hundred flashes and hear a hundred reports; then I saw the man fall

down out of the saddle. My first feeling was of surprised gratification; my first impulse was an apprentice-sportsman's impulse to run and pick up his game. Somebody said, hardly audibly, "Good — we've got him! — wait for the rest." But the rest did not come. We waited — listened — still no more came. There was not a sound, not the whisper of a leaf; just perfect stillness; an uncanny kind of stillness, which was all the more uncanny on account of the damp, earthy, late-night smells now rising and pervading it. Then, wondering, we crept stealthily out, and approached the man. When we got to him the moon revealed him distinctly. He was lying on his back, with his arms abroad; his mouth was open and his chest heaving with long gasps, and his white shirt-front was all splashed with blood. The thought shot through me that I was a murderer; that I had killed a man — a man who had never done me any harm. That was the coldest sensation that ever went through my marrow. I was down by him in a moment, helplessly stroking his forehead; and I would have given anything then — my own life freely — to make him again what he had been five minutes before. And all the boys seemed to be feeling in the same way; they hung over him, full of pitying interest, and tried all they could to help him, and said all sorts of regretful things. They had forgotten all about the enemy; they thought only of this one forlorn unit of the foe. Once my imagination persuaded me that the dying man gave me a reproachful look out of his shadowy eyes, and it seemed to me that I could rather he had stabbed me than done that. He muttered and mumbled like a dreamer in his sleep about his wife and his child; and I thought with a new despair, "This thing that I have done does not end with him; it falls upon *them* too, and they never did me any harm, any more than he."

In a little while the man was dead. He was killed in war; killed in fair and legitimate war; killed in battle, as you may say; and yet he was as sincerely mourned by the opposing force as if he had been their brother. The boys stood there a half-hour sorrowing over him, and recalling the details of the tragedy, and wondering who he might be, and if he were a spy, and saying that if it were to do over again they would not hurt him unless he attacked them first. It soon came out that mine was not the only shot fired; there were five others — a division of the guilt which was a great relief to me, since it in some degree lightened and diminished the burden I was carrying. There were six shots fired at once; but I was not in my right mind at the time, and my heated imagination had magnified my one shot into a volley.

The man was not in uniform, and was not armed. He was a stranger in the country; that was all we ever found out about him. The thought of him got to preying upon me every night; I could not get rid of it. I could not drive it away, the taking of that unoffending life seemed such a wanton thing. And it seemed an epitome of war; that all war must be just that — the killing of strangers against whom you feel no personal



animosity; strangers whom, in other circumstances, you would help if you found them in trouble, and who would help you if you needed it. My campaign was spoiled. It seemed to me that I was not rightly equipped for this awful business; that war was intended for men, and I for a child's nurse. I resolved to retire from this avocation of sham soldiery while I could save some remnant of my self-respect. These morbid thoughts clung to me against reason; for at bottom I did not believe I had touched that man. The law of probabilities decreed me guiltless of his blood; for in all my small experience with guns I had never hit anything I had tried to hit, and I knew I had done my best to hit him. Yet there was no solace in the thought. Against a diseased imagination demonstration goes for nothing.

The rest of my war experience was of a piece with what I have already told of it. We kept monotonously falling back upon one camp or another, and eating up the country. I marvel now at the patience of the farmers and their families. They ought to have shot us; on the contrary, they were as hospitably kind and courteous to us as if we had deserved it. In one of these camps we found Ab Grimes, an Upper Mississippi pilot, who afterward became famous as a dare-devil rebel spy, whose career bristled with desperate adventures. The look and style of his comrades suggested that they had not come into the war to play, and their deeds made good the conjecture later. They were fine horsemen and good revolver shots; but their favorite arm was the lasso. Each had one at his pommel, and could snatch a man out of the saddle with it every time, on a full gallop, at any reasonable distance.

In another camp the chief was a fierce and profane old blacksmith of sixty, and he had furnished his twenty recruits with gigantic home-made bowie knives, to be swung with two hands, like the *machetes* of the Isthmus. It was a grisly spectacle to see that earnest band practising their murderous cuts and slashes under the eye of that remorseless old fanatic.

The last camp which we fell back upon was in a hollow near the village of Florida, where I was born — in Monroe County. Here we were warned one day that a Union colonel was sweeping down on us with a whole regiment at his heel. This looked decidedly serious. Our boys went apart and consulted; then we went back and told the other companies present that the war was a disappointment to us, and we were going to disband. They were getting ready themselves to fall back on some place or other, and we were only waiting for General Tom Harris, who was expected to arrive at any moment; so they tried to persuade us to wait a little while, but the majority of us said no, we were accustomed to falling back, and didn't need any of Tom Harris's help; we could get along perfectly well without him — and save time, too. So about half of our fifteen, including myself, mounted and left on the instant; the others yielded to persuasion and stayed — stayed through the war.



An hour later we met General Harris on the road, with two or three people in his company — his staff, probably, but we could not tell; none of them were in uniform; uniforms had not come into vogue among us yet. Harris ordered us back; but we told him there was a Union colonel coming with a whole regiment in his wake, and it looked as if there was going to be a disturbance; so we had concluded to go home. He raged a little, but it was of no use; our minds were made up. We had done our share; had killed one man, exterminated one army, such as it was; let him go and kill the rest, and that would end the war. I did not see that brisk young general again until last year; then he was wearing white hair and whiskers.

In time I came to know that Union colonel whose coming frightened me out of the war and crippled the Southern cause to that extent — General Grant. I came within a few hours of seeing him when he was as unknown as I was myself; at a time when anybody could have said, "Grant? — Ulysses S. Grant? I do not remember hearing the name before." It seems difficult to realize that there was once a time when such a remark could be rationally made; but there *was*, and I was within a few miles of the place and the occasion, too, though proceeding in the other direction.<sup>22</sup>

<sup>22</sup> Twain's statement that he came within a few hours of seeing Grant must not be taken too literally. It is true that Grant's regiment did move against a Confederate force under Thomas H. Harris at Florida, but this occurred well after Twain was out of the territory — and the army. Grant took command of the Twenty-first Illinois Regiment at Camp Yates on June 16 and was ordered to Quincy on July 3. To toughen his troops he hired wagons for food and camp equipage and started his forces on the ninety-mile march. They made a fair distance each day until they reached the Illinois River where Grant received a dispatch telling him to halt and await a steamer that would take him to Ironton, Missouri. The boat was delayed and when it did come grounded on a sand-bar a few miles below camp. Grant remained at the river several days, waiting to have the boat get off the bar. Before it did, news came that he was to proceed to the aid of another Illinois regiment surrounded by rebels a few miles west of Palmyra, Missouri, at a point on the Hannibal and St. Joe railroad. He immediately entrained his troops and reached Quincy in a few hours. Before he crossed the Mississippi, however, the men of the besieged regiment straggled into town. Shortly thereafter he did take his force to Palmyra, and after remaining there a few days proceeded west to the Salt River and joined his regiment with the Fourteenth Illinois under Colonel John M. Palmer to act as a guard to workmen who were rebuilding a bridge over the river. Even here, Grant was twenty-five miles north of Florida and the territory to which Twain's company operated. Two weeks after arriving at the Salt River bridge Grant was ordered to move against Harris. Again he had to hire wagons and drivers, a difficult matter in a sparsely settled community where loyalties were divided. When he finally arrived at Florida, he found that Harris, hearing of Grant's preparations, had broken camp and was forty miles away. (See *Personal Memoirs of Ulysses S. Grant*, New York, The Century Company, 1895, Vol. I, pp. 198-201, and Kenneth P. Williams, *Lincoln Finds a General*, New York, The Macmillan Co., 1952, Vol. III, pp. 19-21.)

The question which Twain's statement raises is whether he was still with Harris until shortly before Harris broke camp at Florida, and hence was really a member of a Confederate unit threatened by Grant. The answer is no. A study of Grant's movements from the time he left Quincy indicates that he could not have arrived in Florida much before the first of August, or almost two weeks after Twain and Orion

The thoughtful will not throw this war paper of mine lightly aside as being valueless. It has this value: it is a not unfair picture of what went on in many and many a militia camp in the first months of the rebellion, when the green recruits were without discipline, without the steadying and heartening influence of trained leaders; when all their circumstances were new and strange, and charged with exaggerated terrors, and before the invaluable experience of actual collision in the field had turned them from rabbits into soldiers. If this side of the picture of that early day has not before been put into history, then history has been to that degree incomplete, for it had and has its rightful place there. There was more Bull Run material scattered through the early camps of this country than exhibited itself at Bull Run. And yet it learned its trade presently, and helped to fight the great battles later. I could have become a soldier myself if I had waited. I had got part of it learned; I knew more about retreating than the man that invented retreating.

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had left St. Louis for Nevada. Twain, of course, would have been keenly aware of the effect that any mention of Grant in the "Private History" would have. Grant died in July, 1885, and the publication of his *Memoirs* by Twain's company was being widely advertised at the time the "Private History" appeared. The tremendous sales of the *Memoirs* indicate the great interest in and affection for Grant in the winter of 1885-86. Under the circumstances, Twain cannot be criticized too harshly for stretching the facts by a few miles and by two or three weeks.

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## Dear Julia: Two Grant Letters

E. B. LONG

NOT MUCH of a general, just a butcher, give anyone enough men and he can win, he came in at the end, too stupid to be a great strategist, just a drunkard. This was Ulysses S. Grant in the eyes of some critics of his day and even of this day. But in that slow distilling process that is real historical evaluation, a new image of General Grant is emerging. It comes from the work of Lloyd Lewis, Bruce Catton, K. P. Williams and others. Grant the human being and the real military genius is the result.

Here is further proof of his humanism, further proof of his strength of character and the deep seated ability lying within that plain appearing man. Ralph G. Newman of the Abraham Lincoln Book Shop is the owner of two letters from General Grant to his wife and believed to be now published for the first time. They are letters never meant for the public eye. Perhaps publication before this would have been a sacrilege in a way. Unless written purely for the public, as in some cases, a man's letters to his wife are sacred. But in this instance they are such simple, such forthright, such affectionate and revealing epistles that it is suspected Grant would only blush a little inwardly and say nothing if he knew they were printed.

It was after his first great victory when his words "Unconditional Surrender" spread across the land fastened to his initials. At Fort Donelson in February of 1862, a brief letter with imperfect spelling, written in haste to catch a boat. There are expressions of love for his wife and family, a blunt, deep, secure affection. He will write often to make up for his short notes.

But here in the early morning of his career is one more paragraph that should help to end those cries of "Grant the Butcher." In words intended only for his family Grant writes, "These terrible battles are very good things to read about for persons who loose no friends but I am decidedly

in favor of having as little of it as possible. The way to avoid it is to push forward as vigorously as possible." Here is Grant the General and a restrained, deep-running awareness of war, its phases, its costs, with no emotional heroics, just understanding. He didn't always follow this advice until he reached Virginia; he wasn't allowed to. But though it took the General two years to grow into his words we have here what may well be called his philosophy of war. There is so much in these few syllables.

There is one little mistake, however — "Secesh' is now about on its last legs in Tennessee. I want to push on as rapidly as possible to save hard fighting." "Secesh" was not dead; Shiloh, Murfreesboro, Chattanooga, were to prove it. Grant wasn't always right — he learned that and profited thereby.

Then there comes a quieter time, a lull from fighting the enemy. But there were other struggles going on. From that beautiful home above the Tennessee River at Savannah, Grant wrote once more to his wife on March 29, 1862. He speaks of the illness of himself and his staff. Again there is that error, perhaps caused by yearning for an end of it all. "A big fight may be looked for someplace before a great while which it appear to me will be the last in the West." That big fight someplace was soon — down the river at Shiloh Meeting House, but again it wasn't the "last in the West," and Grant didn't heed his own warning to be ready for it.

But although there was a lull in the fighting there was Halleck and his intrigue. General Halleck whom Grant trusted. The whine about not receiving reports from Grant. Grant admits it looks bad, but he received no orders from Halleck either. But this didn't stop the daily reporting from the methodical Grant. "The consequence was I apparently totally disregarded his order." There it is straight from the shoulder but with it is the disappointment at being left behind in the advance. He still has faith in Halleck, however, although he later lost it.

And then once more there is a glimpse of what Grant lived by — no tactics here but a glimpse into his real character — "You need not fear but what I will come out triumphantly. I am pulling no wires, as political Generals do, to advance myself. I have no future ambition. My object is to carry on my part of this war successfully and I am perfectly willing that others may make all the glory they can out of it."

The glory will come, it will come to those such as Grant, slowly and sometimes not perceptibly until the years go by. Then it will come from a reawakening of his own words, from the phrases of writers who know how to probe and feel and breathe with the man they are living with. It will come from the simple words of letters to a man's wife. Read them and be with Grant for a few moments in the spring of 1862.

Fort Donelson, Feb. 24th 1862.

Dear Julia,

I have just returned from Clarkesville. Yesterday some citizens of Nashville came down there ostensibly to bring surgeons to attend their wounded at that place but in reality no doubt to get assurances that they would not be molested. Johnson with his army of rebels have fallen back about forty miles south from Nashville leaving the river clear to our troops. Today a Division of Gen. Buells Army reported to me for orders. As they were on Steamers I ordered them immediately up to Nashville. "Secesh" is now about on its last legs in Tennessee. I want to push on as rapidly as possible to save hard fighting.

These terrible battles are very good things to read about for persons who loose no friends but I am decidedly in favor of having as little of it as possible. The way to avoid it is to push forward as vigorously as possible.

Gen. Halleck is clearly the same way of thinking and with his clear head I think the Congressional Committee for investigating the Conduct of the War will have nothing to enquire about in the West.

I am writing you in great haste a boat being about leaving here. I will write you often to make up for the very short letters I send.

Give my love to all at home and write frequently. Tell me all about the children. I want to see rascal Jess already. Tell Mary she must write to me often. Kiss the children for me and the same for yourself.

Ulys.

Savanna, March 29th 1862

Dear Julia,

I am again fully well. I have had the Diarreh for seven weeks and an inclination to Chills & Fever. We are all in *statu quo*. Dont know when we will move. Troops are constantly arriving so that I will soon have a very large Army. A big fight may be looked for someplace before a great while which it appear to me will be the last in the West. This is all the time supposing that we will be successful which I never doubt for a single moment.

I heard of your arrival at Louisville several days ago through some Steamboat Capt. and before your letter was received stating that you would start the next day.

All my staff are now well though most of them have suffered same as myself. Rawlins & myself both being very unwell at the same time made our labors hard upon us. All that were with me at Cairo are with me here, substuting Dr. Brinton for Dr. Simons, and in addition Capt. Hawk-

ins & Capt. Rowley. Rowley has also been very unwell. Capt. Hillyer will probably return home and go to Washington. His position on my Staff is not recognized and he will have to quit or get it recognized.

Capt. Brinck is in the same category.

All the slanders you have seen against me originated away from where I was. The only foundation was from the fact that I was ordered to remain at Fort Henry and send the expedition under Command of Maj. Gen. Smith. This was ordered because Gen. Halleck received no report from me for near two weeks after the fall of Fort Donelson. The same occurred with me I received nothing from him. The consequence was I apparently totally disregarded his orders. The fact was he was ordering me every day to report the condition of my command. I was not receiving the orders but knowing my duties was reporting daily, and when anything occurred to make it necessary, two or three times a day. When I was ordered to remain behind it was the cause of much astonishment among the troops of my Command and also disappointment. When I was again ordered to join them they showed, I believe, heartfelt joy. Knowing that for some reason I was relieved of the most important part of my command the papers began to surmise the Cause, and the Abolition press the New York Tribune particularly, was willing to hear no solution not unfavorable to me. Such men as Kountz busied themselves very much. I never allowed a word of contradiction to go out from my Head Quarters, thinking this the best course. I know, though I do not like to speak of myself, that Gen. Halleck would regard this Army badly off if I was relieved. Not but what there are Generals with it abundantly able to Command but because it would leave inexperienced officers senior in rank. You need not fear but what I will come out triumphantly. I am pulling no wires, as political Generals do, to advance myself. I have no future ambition. My object is to carry on my part of this war successfully and I am perfectly willing that others may make all the glory they can out of it.

Give my love to all at home. Kiss the children for me.

Ulys.



Fort Sumter, Feb 24<sup>th</sup>, 1862.

Dear Julia,

I have just returned from Charleston. Yesterday some citizens of Greenville came down there ostensibly to bring surgeons to attend their wounded at that place but in reality we doubt to get assurance that they would not be overhauled. Johnson with his army of rebels have fallen back about forty miles south from Nashville leaving the river clear to our troops. Today a Division of Gen. Bull's Army reported to me for orders. As they were on steamers I ordered them immediately up to Nashville. "Leech" is now about on its last legs in Tennessee. I want to push on as rapidly as possible to I have had fighting.

These terrible battles are very grim things to read about for persons who have no friends but I am decidedly in favor of having a little of it as possible. The way to avoid it is to push forward as vigorously as possible.

Gen. Bull's is clearly the same way of thinking and with his clear head I think the Congressional Committee for investigating the Conduct of the War will have nothing to enquire about in the West.

I am writing you in great haste a best

being about leaving here. I will write you often to  
make up for the very short letters I send.

Give my love to all at home and write frequently.  
Tell me all about the children. I want to see several faces  
already. Tell Mary she must write to me often.

Kiss the children for me and the same for your  
little girl.

Savanna, March 29<sup>th</sup> 1862

Dear Julia,

I am again fully well. I have  
had the Stomach for some weeks and an  
inclination to Chills & Fever. We are all  
in ~~the~~ good. I don't know when we  
will move. Troops are constantly arriving so  
that I will soon have a very large Army.  
A big fight may be looked for sometime  
before a great while which it appears to  
me will be the last in the West. This  
is all the time improving that we will  
be successful which I never doubt for  
a single moment.

I heard of your arrival at Louisville  
several days ago through some steamboat  
Capt. and before your letter was received  
stating that you would start the next  
day.

All my stuff are now well thought  
most of them have suffered same as  
myself. Harold & myself both being  
very dumb at the same time. Master

our labors had upon us. All that were  
with me at Cairn are with me here, substituting  
Lt. Brinton for Lt. Simons, and in addition  
Capt. Hawkins & Capt. Rowley. Rowley has  
also been very unwell. Capt. Heltzer will  
probably return home and go to Washington.  
His position on my staff is not recognized and  
he will have to fight or get it recognized.

Capt. Brinton is in the same category.  
All the slander you have seen against me  
originated away from where I was. The only  
foundation was from the fact that I was  
ordered to remain at Fort Henry and send  
the expedition under command of Maj. Gen.  
Smith. This was ordered because Gen. Halleck  
received no report from me for over two weeks after  
the fall of Fort Donelson. The same occurred with  
me I received nothing from him. The consequence  
was I apparently totally disregarded his order.

The fact was he was ordering me every day  
to report the condition of my command.  
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or three times a day. When I was ordered to remain behind I was the cause of much astonishment among the troops of my command and also disappointment. When I was again ordered to join them they showed, I believe, heartfelt joy. Knowing that for some reason I was relieved of the most important part of my command the papers began to surmise the cause, and the Abolition press, the New York Tribune particularly, was willing to hear to no solution not unfavorable to me. Such was Henry's bugle. ~~He was very much~~ I never allowed a word of contradiction to go out from my Headquarters, thinking this the best course. I know, though I do not like to speak of myself, that Gen. Halleck would again throw me badly off if I was relieved but what then as General with it abundantly able to command but because it would leave inexperienced officers senior in rank. You need not fear but what I will come out triumphantly. I am putting no wires, as political General do, to advance myself. I have no future ambition—My object is to carry

on my part of this war successfully and  
I am perfectly willing that others may make  
all the glory they can out of it.

Give my love to all at home. Kiss the  
children for me.

Wm. L.



DR. OTTO EISENSCHIML is equally distinguished as a chemist and as a historian. Perhaps his best known works are *Why Was Lincoln Murdered?* and *In the Shadow of Lincoln's Death*. His probing, yet methodical, approach to a historical problem is clearly evident in *"Bragg's Headquarters."*

## Bragg's Headquarters

OTTO EISENSCHIML

IF IT HAD NOT BEEN for old Robert Brannon, the little hill on the outskirts of Chattanooga called Orchard Knob would never have meant much to me. It was Brannon who gave it life, and I always honor his memory by visiting Orchard Knob when I happen to be in that vicinity.

Brannon had been a private in an Ohio Regiment, and I am sure the Union army never had a more enthusiastic soldier. Chickamauga had been one of his battles, and in later years he helped lay out the National Military Park. When I met him the first time he was in his eighties, too old for arduous duties, but mentally as alert as ever. He was living out his last years as custodian of Orchard Knob National Monument, so designated because of the role it had played in the battle of Missionary Ridge.

Orchard Knob is a little hillock, which stands about halfway between the 1863 city limits and Missionary Ridge. In November of that year the 28th Alabama was part of the force occupying it as an outpost. When the Union troops stormed forward, about 150 of the Alabamians were forced to surrender, but not before they had inflicted heavy losses on their opponents. I have always harbored a soft spot in my heart for this handful of boys in gray. When they saw that human tidal wave rolling their way, how they must have been torn between duty, which bade them stay, and the impulse to run. They stayed. And if you ever go to see Orchard Knob, stop for a moment and lift your hat to the brave 28th Alabama.

Bob Brannon was proud of his little domain, but even he could not make much of its history, and begged to let him show me over Chickamauga. So we set out to see the battlefield through the eyes of one who had been around when the bullets whistled and the now silent guns were spewing forth their devil's brew of smoke, fire and grapeshot.

Reliving the famous battle with Bob was no picnic. He went through

all the movements of his regiment, which certainly must have had a hectic time. The two of us marched, double-quickd, rested — not often — attacked, retreated, but hardly ever ceased fighting. Bob did not spare himself, nor me. At one time we crawled for a quarter of a mile on our stomachs to execute a flank attack. When we came to a little clearing, he yelled, "At 'em, boys!" Then he jumped to his feet, I following, and we ran forward. Suddenly I felt his hand on my shoulder and was jerked to a halt. "You fool," he shouted, "can't you see them batteries? Down on your belly!" Bob threw himself on the ground, and I collapsed alongside of him. He opened his mouth and held his ears, I likewise. The batteries had opened up on us with all they had, and the noise was terrible. But it did not last long. Bob's mouth soon closed, and he got up. "Quick," he commanded, "we can't let this poor fellow lie here." He picked up one end of a rotting log, I the other, and together we dragged the wounded man down into a ravine, where we considered him comparatively safe.

At the end of the day I was completely done, but Bob only laughed happily. He had at last found someone, he said, to whom he could show Chickamauga as it should be shown.

"What do we do next?" my comrade-in-arms asked me next morning. This time I offered him a plan of which he disapproved. I wanted to go to Lafayette, Georgia, and find where General Braxton Bragg's headquarters had been prior to the battle.

"What in all that's holy you want to find that shanty for?" Bob asked me in disgust. "It's a twenty mile ride to Lafayette, and when you get there, what do you see? There was no fighting there, and who the hell cares where that old Rebel rested his fanny?"

I cared. I cannot visualize any historical event, unless I know as much about it as can be learned by retracing all steps pertaining to it. If Mr. Brannon didn't want to go, I declared, I'd take the trip alone. With a growl he gave in.

Bob was right. There had been no fighting at Lafayette, but it might easily have become famous as the centre of a spider's nest, if Bragg's plans had worked out. Among the rugged mountains of that region, he figured, Rosecrans' scattered forces would not be able to support one another, and he contemplated attacking each in turn. For a while things promised well. Sitting in Lafayette, he watched the flies getting tangled up on the periphery of his net. When they were far enough separated, he would pounce. Unfortunately for him, the flies disentangled themselves and reunited in a swarm at Chickamauga. Bragg beat them there, but failed to follow up his victory. The one day on which he rested made the difference between winning and losing the campaign.

Why Bragg blundered so inexcusably has never been fully explained, but here is how it is said to have happened. At the end of the battle

Bragg was suffering from a sick headache, and retired to his tent with orders not to be disturbed under any circumstances. His orders, though, were not to remain unchallenged. Nathan B. Forrest, perhaps the best of all generals in both armies, saw clearly that, unless the pursuit of the Union troops were undertaken at once and in full force, they would have time to entrench. When he approached Bragg's tent, he was refused admittance, but he shoved the sentinel to one side and entered. Bragg was lying on his cot, moaning, his face turned to the wall.

"I am too sick to talk to you," he whispered. "Leave me alone."

"The hell you are too sick," Forrest cried, and turned his superior around by a pull of his powerful arm. "You are going to talk to me now, and give orders to pursue." Bragg, however, remained stubborn. "I am a very sick man," he repeated, "I can't think straight."

In disgust Forrest left the tent, and next morning undertook the pursuit alone with his 1500 men. Of course, it was ineffectual.

One wonders what might have happened if aspirin had been on the market at that time. On the 20th of September, 1863, two little pills might have turned the course of history.

Lafayette — the natives pronounce it *La-fay-ette* — had been a mere hamlet in 1863, and still was not much to look at thirty years ago: a square with a grass plot in the center, a few houses, and still fewer side streets. I did not see any mansions such as Civil War generals were fond of occupying. Maybe Bragg really had stayed in a shanty, as Bob had suggested.

The old veteran, still grunting, kept a step behind me as we walked around. It was his way of showing his displeasure. I headed toward the only restaurant in town, and we ate our lunch in silence.

In the course of years I have worked out a formula which shortens historical research in towns where I know no one, and where no one knows me. I search for the oldest inhabitant, because it is a safe bet that from him I will get a sympathetic hearing. In order to locate him, so the formula teaches further, go to a restaurant, tip the waitress handsomely, and the information will be forthcoming, garrulously.

Well, the formula worked in Lafayette as it had worked everywhere else. The oldest inhabitant of Lafayette was the owner of the only hotel in town. He was pretty feeble, the waitress told us, and his daughter was running the place for him. If we cared to go there now — the waitress looked at her watch — we'd find him sitting in a rocking chair in the lobby, reading the *Chattanooga* morning paper. It took that long, she added apologetically, for the bus to bring it out.

Our informant had judged the situation correctly. When we entered

the lobby, we saw an old man with a white mustache and beard, cut in Robert Lee style, sitting in a rocking chair, a Chattanooga morning paper closely held to his face.

"Hello, Johnny," said Mr. Brannon. Without looking up, the hotelier replied, "Hello, Yank."

In five seconds time had slipped back sixty-odd years.

The old Confederate, however, knew nothing about Bragg's headquarters. His fighting had been done in the east, and he had been hundreds of miles away when his home town carved for itself a page in the annals. His daughter, a good-looking, middle aged, buxomish lady, who had joined us in the meantime, now broke into the discussion.

"Pop," she said, "you're getting forgetful. You know where that spot is, all right. Go on and tell them."

But Pop shook his head in perplexity. He did not remember.

"Then I'll tell you," declared his daughter. "Funny thing, too, because a month ago, if you had asked me, I wouldn't have known. Neither would Pop. And both of us have lived in this here town all our lives."

I asked her politely if she was interested in local history.

"Not exactly," she laughed. "It was this-a-way. Pop is having trouble with his bowels, so I make him walk around the square three times each morning before I let him have his breakfast. Now a month or so ago he took his walk as usual. He got so tired, he sat down on the grass you see out there. But as soon as he touched the ground, he let out an awful yell, and jumped up as if something had bit him. I got scared. Ain't many snakes hereabouts, but you never can tell. So I run outside, and Pop is rubbing his backside and groans something awful. I get down on my knees to see what he has struck, and what do you think it was?"

She paused dramatically. I knew that by not saying anything I'd get the quickest answer.

"After getting down to my knees," she continued, "I shoved the high grass aside. Then I found out what had happened. Pop had sat down on a metal stick that had a sharp point. I couldn't imagine what that thing was doing there, and plucked out the grass around it. And what did I find? A marker. Go out and see for yourselves what it says on it."

We thanked her and went out. The grass had grown again in the meantime, but we exposed the marker without trouble. This is what it said, in substance:

*On this spot General Braxton Bragg  
had his headquarters in September 1863.*

Years later I visited Lafayette again. The little town had prospered, the grass plot had been improved, and the marker had been replaced by a pyramid of cannon balls, the kind which signifies a general's headquarters on Civil War battlefields.

Once upon a time the chairman of a historical group introduced me as the man who had discovered Bragg's Lafayette headquarters. I declined the compliment. The credit for discovering those headquarters does not belong to me, but solely to the old veteran's hind-quarters.

# NOTES

I found it rather difficult to establish the part which the 28th Alabama played in the fight at Orchard Knob. No other Southern regiment is mentioned in the Federal Reports, although it is probable that other units also were engaged there.

Gilbert E. Govan, librarian of the University of Chattanooga, to whom I am also indebted for the Forrest episode, quoted to me an article in the *Southern Bivouac*, by James W. A. Wright, who thought that the 28th Alabama, surrounded on Orchard Knob, surrendered *in toto*. According to the Alabama volume of the *Confederate Military History*, however, the regiment fought later that day at Missionary Ridge, which makes it appear that at least part of the regiment had been successfully withdrawn.

Charles S. Dunn, Superintendent of the Chicamauga and Chattanooga National Military Parks, also doubts that the entire 28th Alabama surrendered.

A marker on Orchard Knob states that

*. . . The 28th Alabama, misunderstanding its orders to be to hold its position at all hazards, remained in rifle-pits fighting, and 146 officers and men were captured. . . .*

Another marker states that

*. . . The 28th Alabama regiment occupied the crest of the . . . knoll. . . . Outflanked and overwhelmed, a large portion of the regiment was captured, but not until it had inflicted a loss on Hazen's brigade alone, in killed and wounded, of 167. . . .*

It was Mr. Dunn who gave me this information, together with these references: *Official Records*, Series I, Vol. XXXI, Part II, pp. 281, 256, 251.

In saying that two little pills of aspirin might have turned the course of history that 20th day of September, 1863, I am assuming that Bragg was suffering from an ordinary headache, not from a chronic affliction like migraine, against which aspirin and related compounds are considerably less effective.

## *Sword and Plough*

CHARLES DAWSON SHANLEY

The Sword came down to the red-brown field,  
Where the Plough to the furrow heaved and keeled;  
And it looked so proud in its jingling gear, —  
Said the Plough to the Sword, "What brings you here?"

"Long years ago, ere I was born,  
They doubled my grandsire up, one morn,  
To forge a share for you, and now  
They want him back," said the Sword to the Plough.

The red-brown field glowed a deeper red,  
As the gleam of War o'er the landscape sped;  
The sabres flashed, the cannon roared,  
And side by side fought the Plough and the Sword.



## For Collectors Only

EDITED BY RALPH G. NEWMAN

18 East Chestnut Street

Chicago 11, Illinois

IN APRIL, 1939, THE LATE DOUGLAS SOUTHALL FREEMAN delivered three addresses at the Alabama College, the State College for Women, to inaugurate the *Dancy Lectures*. These lectures formed the basis for *The South to Posterity*, Dr. Freeman's work on the writing of Confederate history, in which he presented his "Confederate Book Shelf."

Immediately after the publication of Dr. Freeman's "Shelf," the more than fifty titles therein recommended became the immediate collecting goal of all Civil War enthusiasts. The Freeman list, with additions, still remains the yardstick by which members of the modern corps of literary Johnny Rebs measure their libraries.

But what about Billy Yank's books? During the sixteen years that have elapsed since the appearance of the Confederate list, many collectors have expressed the hope that a similar Union book shelf might be prepared. The author of this column often discussed this project with the late Lloyd Lewis, and the author of *Sherman, Fighting Prophet* would undoubtedly have prepared such a list had he lived.

A Union book shelf seems to be an appropriate subject to discuss in CIVIL WAR HISTORY, and I hope to be able to devote the space allotted to me in the next several issues to preliminary investigations and listings of titles which might eventually find their way into a more or less definitive select catalogue. I hope the readers of CIVIL WAR HISTORY and of this column will be kind enough to send their suggestions and comments, and that perhaps as a result of our collaboration we can, in time, present an acceptable list of books relating to the Northern participation in the war of the sixties.

## REFERENCE WORKS

Certain basic reference works recommended in Dr. Freeman's list are also essential to a Union list. These titles are listed herewith with a few additions and with the elimination of those works purely Southern in character. (Note: In all cases the title and edition listed will be the earliest appearance, unless the work has been superseded by a better edition, in which case the best edition will be recorded. Where there is any doubt, or where more than one edition might be useful to the student, collector or scholar, they will all be listed.)

*Atlas to Accompany the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies.* Washington: Government Printing Office, 1891-1895, 175 plates.

*Campaigns of the Civil War*, 13 volumes. *The Navy in the Civil War*, 3 volumes. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1881-1885.

JOHNSON, ROBERT UNDERWOOD and CLARENCE CLOUGH BUEL, editors, *Battles and Leaders of the Civil War*. New York: The Century Co., 1884-1888, 4 volumes.

MILLER, FRANCIS TREVELYAN, *The Photographic History of the Civil War*. New York: The Review of Reviews Co., 1911, 10 volumes.

MOORE, FRANK, editor, *The Rebellion Record*. New York: G. P. Putnam's and D. Van Nostrand, 1861-1868, 11 volumes and supplement.

STEELE, MATTHEW FORNEY, *American Campaigns*. Washington: War Department, Office of the Chief of Staff, 1909, 2 volumes.

*The War of the Rebellion . . . Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1890-1901, 128 volumes.

*The War of the Rebellion . . . Official Records of the Union and Confederate Navies*. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1894-1922, 30 volumes.

## PERSONAL NARRATIVES, DIARIES AND LETTERS

No Union list of personal narratives could possibly begin without the story of the victorious general. A truly remarkable work, not only in the military field, but as a work of literature, the book itself was the result of General Grant's last and greatest victory — his fight against death itself. The *Memoirs* belong in any list of 100 great American books.

GRANT, ULYSSES SIMPSON, *Personal Memoirs of U. S. Grant*. New York: Chas. L. Webster & Co., 1885, 2 volumes. *One volume edition*, with Notes and Introduction by E. B. Long. Cleveland: The World Publishing Co., 1952.

ADAMS, CHARLES FRANCIS, CHARLES FRANCIS ADAMS, JR. AND HENRY ADAMS, *A Cycle of Adams Letters, 1861-1865*. Edited by Worthington C. Ford. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1920, 2 volumes.

- BATES, EDWARD, *The Diary of Edward Bates, 1859-1866*. Edited by Howard K. Beale. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1933.
- BEATTY, JOHN, *The Citizen-Soldier; or, Memoirs of a Volunteer*. Cincinnati: Wiltstach, Baldwin & Co., 1879. *New Edition* with Introduction by Lloyd Lewis and Edited by Harvey S. Ford, issued under the title *Memoirs of a Volunteer 1861-1863*. New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1946.
- BUTLER, BENJAMIN FRANKLIN, *Autobiography and Personal Reminiscences of Major-General Benjamin F. Butler*. *Butler's Book*. Boston: A. M. Thayer & Co., 1892.
- CHASE, SALMON PORTLAND, *Inside Lincoln's Cabinet. The Civil War Diaries of Salmon P. Chase*. Edited by David Donald. New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1954.
- CLAY, CASSIUS MARCELLUS, *Memoirs, Writings and Speeches*. Cincinnati: J. F. Brennan & Co., 1886. (Volume I only of a projected two-volume work).
- COX, JACOB DOLSON, *Military Reminiscences of the Civil War*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1900, 2 volumes.
- CRAWFORD, SAMUEL WYLIE, *The Genesis of the Civil War*. New York: Chas. L. Webster & Co., 1887.
- DANA, CHARLES ANDERSON, *Recollections of the Civil War*. New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1898.
- DEFORREST, JOHN WILLIAM, *A Volunteer's Adventures: A Union Captain's Record of the Civil War*. Edited by James H. Croushore, introduction by Stanley T. Williams. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1946.
- DETROBRIAND, REGIS, *Four Years with the Army of the Potomac*. Translated by George K. Dauchy. Boston: Ticknor & Co., 1889.
- DIX, JOHN ADAMS, *Memoirs of John Adams Dix*. Compiled by his son Morgan Dix. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1883, 2 volumes.
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As the reader will obviously note, a mere listing of some of the books to be considered as candidates for *one category* of the Union Book Shelf, produces almost as many titles as appeared in the *entire* Confederate Book Shelf. None of the above titles *must* appear in a final list, but they are all qualified candidates. In preparing this list originally I overlooked the need for the books reflecting the political views of the North. It was only when I reviewed Dr. Freeman's book again, that I realized how much attention he had given to political and social life in the Confederacy.

Since it is my intention to continue this list, in the next issue I shall discuss and offer for your consideration "Notable Biographies" of Union military and political leaders.



## Notes & Queries

EDITED BY BOYD B. STUTLER

517 Main Street

Charleston, West Virginia

STUDENTS OF THE CIVIL WAR PERIOD — or at least most of them — are constantly faced with unanswered questions about some phase of the war. And they are just as constantly uncovering new and unrecorded sidelights on military operations, personnel involved in the war, recording of its history, and a thousand and one other things. It has occurred to the editors that a section of *Civil War History* would be welcomed in which questions may be freely asked and just as freely answered if there is an answer to be found. Also in which notes of obscure items, of newly discovered incidents, or corrections of published writings may be published.

Some one has the answer to nearly every perplexing question. It may be that the answer has long been locked in an old, unpublished letter just recently resurrected from "grandpa's old trunk," or from an obscure pamphlet that had no more than local or family circulation, or from a newspaper clipping taken years ago and carefully laid in the family Bible (a custom that seems to have been abandoned in this modern age), or from other sources not available to the careful researcher. That same letter, pamphlet or newspaper cutting may also contain rich meat for an informative note on some obscure, but important, incident.

Answers will be appended to the query if and when the answer can be found before publication. But if the answer is not readily at hand, readers are invited to furnish it, citing source of information, for publication in a later number. The notes (other than staff-inspired contributions) must come spontaneously from the broad field. Some one, for instance, might locate the first printing of Artemus Ward's "High Handed Outrage at Utiky," a humorous skit which delighted thousands of Civil War soldiers in the field, and even Abraham Lincoln in the White House.

*Notes and Queries* is designed as an open forum for the exchange of ideas and information. Make the best use of it. And so to Query No. 1:

## WASHINGTON'S FIREMEN

According to all contemporary reports, the regiment of New York Volunteer firemen (1st Fire Zouaves, 112th New York State Volunteers) commanded by Colonel E. E. Ellsworth was one of the first units to arrive in Washington after Lincoln's call for troops. Almost immediately upon arrival they were called upon to man the capital city's fire equipment and apparently did a first-rate, professional job in saving Willard's Hotel from the flames. Washington's fire department was well organized and well equipped for its time; there had been no general exodus from the city, but the local firemen were conspicuous by their absence. No report tells us why the Zouaves were used. Query: Where were the Washington firemen?

*Irving Herschbein*

## CIVIL WAR SONG

I am trying to find a Civil War poem or song in which the following lines occur: "She had three sons, / Three only ones; / Each worth his weight in gold. / One lies down near Appomattox, / Many miles away. / Another sleeps at Chickamauga / etc. Will some reader kindly tell me where this song or poem can be found, and also the name of the author?

*William H. Montgomery*

## JOHN BROWN'S PIKES

When John Brown assembled his arms for his raid on Harpers Ferry in 1859 he had, in addition to firearms, 954 pikes — long blades mounted on six- or eight-foot shafts. A few of the pikes were carried into Harpers Ferry by the raiders, some were hauled to a nearby schoolhouse which had been pressed into duty as an arms depot, but the greater number were left at the Kennedy Farm rendezvous. After the failure of the *putsch*, a number of the weapons were carried off by militiamen and souvenir hunters — the U. S. Marines recovered 483, which Colonel (later General) Robert E. Lee stored in the arsenal at Harpers Ferry. When that town was taken over by Virginia State troops on the night of April 18, 1861, the pikes fell into the hands of the Confederate forces, and were later shipped to Richmond with parts of the armory and arsenal equipment. In 1862, when the South was desperate for small arms, the pikes were issued to a cavalry outfit, said to have been a Texas unit, for use as lances — and were so used throughout the rest of the war. The unit surrendered in or near Alabama at the close of hostilities, at any rate the few remaining John Brown pikes were stored in the arsenal at Mount Vernon, Alabama, until some time in the late 1870's. Query: What Confederate cavalry outfit used the John Brown pikes?

*Boyd B. Stutler*

# The Continuing War

EDITED BY E. B. LONG

333 South Edson

Lombard, Illinois

THE DYING, the suffering, the march of events of it all are over but the guns are not actually silent. The heartache is still there, the tragedy, glory, pathos and history of it are still with us and will always be with us at least in our lifetime. There are those who still fight this war of ours, fight it by visiting battlefields, in organizations such as the Round Tables, and in reading and writing about it.

The purpose of this column is to serve as a bulletin board of what is going on in the field of writing about the Civil War. Books already published or about to be published will be covered elsewhere in the literary section. Our purpose is to announce what you are writing about, planning to write about or seeking material about. In order to fulfill this purpose we need help. If you are working on a book, pamphlet or article on the Civil War let us know. As a result you may receive the help you need, may uncover material of real value to you and at the least inform your friends and fellow soldiers what is going on. Just write to the above address.

We know that in this first issue we are not catching all those who are laboring in the vineyards and may be missing many, but as time goes on we hope to cover all Civil War projects to let our readers know what is in store for them.

For instance, Bruce Catton has signed a contract to complete the life of Grant so ably started by the late Lloyd Lewis. Catton is editor of *American Heritage* and author of the Pulitzer Prize winning *A Stillness at Appomattox*, *U.S. Grant and the American Military Tradition*, *Glory Road* and *Mr. Lincoln's Army*. He is eminently qualified as a writer and historian to complete this monumental work.

For many years there has been a need for a volume on the munitions, guns and ammunition of the Civil War. Robert V. Bruce of Malden, Mass., is working on such a book and is looking for sources of informa-

tion. Dr. Frank Vandiver of Washington University in St. Louis, author of *Ploughshares into Swords: Josiah Gorgas and Confederate Ordnance*, is now writing what promises to be a major biography of "Stonewall" Jackson. Also on the Confederate side, T. Harry Williams of Louisiana State University has completed a much needed biography of General P.G.T. Beauregard. Williams is author of *Lincoln and His Generals* and other books. Ishbel Ross, author of biographies of Rose Greenhow and Kate Chase, is also working on a life of Beauregard. Ezra "Bud" Warner of Douglas, Ariz., is finishing his important *Generals in Gray*, a study of who was what in the Confederacy. The somewhat neglected Confederate Navy will receive its just place in a nearly completed volume by W. T. Duganne of LaPorte, Ind.

On the Northern side, Benjamin P. Thomas, author of the splendid *Abraham Lincoln*, is well into what promises to be a definitive life of Edwin M. Stanton. But he paused for a little while to edit the *Memoirs of Sylvanus Cadwallader*. Cadwallader was a major war correspondent for the old *Chicago Times* and the *New York Herald* and possibly knew more about General Grant and the subject of liquor than anyone outside of his staff and General Rawlins. The publication of these long forgotten papers will be an important addition to the knowledge of Civil War journalism and to the war itself. Thomas has written a fine introduction and furnished footnotes throughout. George Fleming, Chicago encyclopedist, is working on a life of John A. Logan, who deserves to have the story of his politics and his generalship told.

In the spy field James D. Horan, author of *Confederate Agent*, is laboring on a volume to be called *A Secret History of the Civil War*. This record of spies and espionage agents will be published in two volumes, one for the Union and one for the Confederacy. Horan has asked for help in determining who is considered the most important agent, both North and South, and why. He also wants published or unpublished material and information as to major acts of sabotage and secret political deals.

Lincoln students will be pleased to know that William Townsend's fine *Lincoln in His Wife's Home Town*, long a collector's item, will be printed in a new edition. Jim Bishop is author of *The Day Lincoln Was Shot*, a study of that infamous Good Friday.

Turning to new sources, we have received notice of important letters and collections given to various institutions where they may be used by students of our war. The Library of Congress has announced receipt of the papers of Benjamin F. Butler, a group of 13,000 documents. The library also has been given another segment of the papers of General Charles Ewing, including his diary covering the Civil War period. The Library of Congress is recipient of four important Lincoln items given by Alfred Whital Stern of Chicago. They include a first edition of the Lincoln-Douglas debates inscribed by Lincoln. Justin G. Turner of

Hollywood has given the library fifteen civil war documents that contributed to the interpretation of the "cold war" period preceding Fort Sumter. An extremely valuable collection of more than 3,000 photographs has been given the library by the daughters of L. C. Handy, Mrs. Mary H. Evans and Mrs. Alice H. Cox. Handy was a nephew of the famous photographer Matthew B. Brady. For many years the ladies operated the Handy studios in Washington. However, permission to publish the pictures must be obtained from either Mrs. Evans or Mrs. Cox for the next ten years. Members of the family of John Hay have presented Brown University with original notebooks and other documents of Hay, including many items of the time when he was presidential secretary under Lincoln.

IF YOU'VE ENJOYED

## *Civil War History*

But have not yet had time to enter a subscription, you may wish to do so now. Planning for the next issues is well advanced — they will include interesting articles on battles in the Mississippi Valley, a study of Charles A. Dana, and one of Edward Everett and his Gettysburg oration. The chaplain in the Civil War will be the subject of an article, and an early issue will be given over entirely to an examination of the theater of the period. All of CIVIL WAR HISTORY's regular features will continue — book reviews, notes and queries, work in progress reports, collectors' notes. Maps, photostats and line drawings will be used generously throughout. If you would like to receive CIVIL WAR HISTORY regularly (or want to send it to a friend) please fill out the blank below, mentioning whether you want the present issue included in your subscription.

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## Book Reviews

EDITED BY CHARLES T. MILLER

State University of Iowa  
English Department, Iowa City

*Bohemian Brigade: Civil War Newsmen in Action.* By Louis M. Starr.  
(New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1954. Pp. xvii, 367, xix. \$5.00.)

THERE IS A BASIC DIFFICULTY with Mr. Starr's lively book, a difficulty of which the author is probably more aware than anyone else. It has presented itself to almost every writer who has dealt with some specialized aspect of the Civil War. The difficulty lies in answering a simple question of proportion: how much war, and how much specialty? The best answer, obviously, is "just enough of both," but any writer who hopes to stay under eight hundred pages will probably show heavier marks of neglect on one side than on the other. Mr. Starr has chosen to neglect the war and to concentrate upon the men who reported it and the editors who put their work in print.

This makes sense, of course, in accordance with his announced subject, but the result is a book which will be of primary interest to the reader who already knows well the historical framework and the military development of the war. The battle of Fredericksburg will emerge sharply for any reader, because the engagement is as easy to comprehend as if it had all been plotted by Hollywood, and three or four well-written paragraphs are enough to tell of it. But the reader of *Bohemian Brigade* would do well to know beforehand what really happened at Antietam, at Shiloh, and in the trenches before Petersburg, or his confusion and sense of frustration will be considerable. Perhaps this problem is insignificant to many who read this review, but for students of American journalism and for those interested in the broader aspects of nineteenth century American history, it sharply limits the usefulness and inherent interest of the book. Other writers working from a specialized viewpoint (Margaret Leech, tinsel and all, is one of them) have done an appreciably better job of conveying the sense of what the war was about and what happened to armies in the field.

*Bohemian Brigade* will bring most satisfaction to those who have studied the war sufficiently to be curious about certain names which turn up from

time to time, usually in a minor way, in other accounts, or to those who have seen a footnote citation often enough to wonder about the man who wrote the thing cited. For such readers, here is detail on such men as Sylvanus Cadwallader, whose personal association with Grant was so close that the General's own staff prepared and maintained the reporter's quarters; A. B. Richardson, who spent most of the war in Confederate prisons; Edmund Clarence Stedman, whose account of the first battle of Bull Run is generally regarded as one of the great pieces of battle reporting in American journalism; and George A. Townsend, perhaps the best professional of the lot. Here also are Henry Villard, Whitelaw Reid, and dozens of other reporters. There are so many, indeed, that one is inclined to wish there were fewer of them. For the most part, Mr. Starr follows the war chronologically, a system which means that reporters turn up briefly for a few pages and then disappear for a hundred. So many are touched upon that keeping them straight becomes almost impossible, apparently even for Mr. Starr, who introduces Charles A. Page of Greeley's *Tribune* with some personal background near the beginning of the volume and then, in effect, reintroduces him with the same material near its close.

Among this considerable gallery Mr. Starr has chosen to place several editors, because he is a newsman himself and well knows that editors on a desk far from the fighting front have much to do, not only with the way the news story is presented but with the way it is covered in the first place. He therefore wisely pays much attention to Charles A. Dana of the *Tribune*; Dana's successor, Sydney H. Gay; Frederic Hudson of Bennett's *Herald*; and Samuel Wilkeson, whose varied career included the managership of the *Tribune's* Washington bureau. The author begins with Dana, the first "managing editor" of an American newspaper, and carefully defines his relationship with Greeley. In a sense, writing about Greeley is like writing about the battle of Fredericksburg; two or three paragraphs are enough for a lasting impression. But clarifying the development of the important functions of "the desk," and along with it the structure of mid-nineteenth century newsgathering, is quite another matter, and it is here that *Bohemian Brigade* makes its greatest contribution.

One of the virtues of the specialized point of view is that it can cast new light on familiar subject matter—for instance, the Cincinnati *Commercial's* fantastic story of Sherman's "insanity"; the famous hoax of Joseph Howard in which messages, attributed to Lincoln and Stanton and despairing of the future of the Union, were forged on Associated Press flimsies and actually printed by two New York dailies; and the vanity of Simon Cameron, with Sam Wilkeson's exploitation of this trait to make himself the first "inside man" in reporting Washington politics.

Generally, Mr. Starr seems to agree with many others that the caliber of newspaper reporting of the Civil War was not particularly high. He points out that newspapers were responsible not only for much false and damaging sensationalism but also for costly violations of military security. Although the American newspaper tradition of "objectivity on the front page, opinion on the editorial page" originated during the war, the author shows that very little objectivity or good judgment was actually demonstrated.

With equal cogency, however, he points out that the press of the North created an atmosphere unknown to any people under similar circumstances before—a universal sense of participation, of immediacy, of common effort.

This was, if not the maturity, at least the adolescence of the newspaper as an American institution. He demonstrates also that although good reporting was relatively uncommon, it was sometimes very good indeed. For example, he quotes at length an account of the surrender at Appomattox, written by Jerome B. Stillson of the *New York World*. It was dated April 12, and ended as follows:

The campaign has made General Grant what he never was before — a great general in the estimation of the whole army. It has elevated every corps commander into the pride of his command; it has given the Army of the Potomac that decisive victory for which it has heretofore striven in vain through four years of almost constant fighting; it has given the Union a fresh and final assurance that "it must and shall be preserved."

This is not only good and lucid prose; it is also sound history, written not with the assuring perspective of years, but while Confederate rifles were still stacked in surrender on the new spring grass.

WILLIAM E. PORTER

Iowa City, Iowa

*A History of the Southern Confederacy.* By Clement Eaton. (New York: The Macmillan Company. 1954. Pp. ix, 351. \$5.50.)

ALTHOUGH AN EXCELLENT VOLUME has appeared in *The Confederate States of America, 1861-1865*, by Professor E. Merton Coulter, there is undoubtedly room for a shorter, less fully comprehensive history of the Confederacy. That is not to say that this volume is not comprehensive, for the reviewer was frequently surprised by the many, varied subjects which the author was able to introduce, even if sometimes sketchily. Each chapter is packed with details; even such small details as the naval training school of the Confederacy, the naval powder works at Columbia, the lack of salt, and the signal system have found a place in the volume.

The writer frankly avows his purpose to seek "a balance between the social, political, and military history of the Southern Confederacy" (viii). In this he has succeeded, for he has restricted the discussion of the strictly military aspects to three chapters (VIII, X, XIV), with an additional chapter concerning naval operations. In the three chapters devoted to the conflicts on land he has sketched admirably in brief compass a clear account of the military side of the war. Space is thus secured in which to note the political background which produced the war, to trace the diplomatic history of this transitory nation, to give attention to the life of the soldiers, to indicate the narrow economic basis which disintegrated under four years of conflict, and to discuss the society and culture under war conditions. Chapter VI, which deals with the generals and the strategy, offers, in the judgment of this reviewer, discriminating thumb-nail sketches of the chief Confederate generals. Moreover, one of the major contributions of the book is the chapter devoted to the loss of the will to fight, which is here analyzed carefully rather than being merely stated as a fact.

The research is excellent. Such a wide subject as the Civil War period in the South involved the examination of an enormous body of printed material on many varied subjects. In addition to the well-recognized sources, many recent

books and articles have been cited. Mr. Eaton has also made good use of manuscript sources in widely scattered depositories, which first-hand material has given freshness to many passages.

The author is at his best, in the opinion of this reviewer, in the conclusions he draws from the perspective of almost a century after the events described. Many examples arrest the reader's attention. His criticism of Confederate strategy (124-129) is a case in point. Other illustrations are his appraisals of the inadequacies of the government (58-60), of the errors which cost Lee the victory at Gettysburg (200-204), of the weaknesses which caused the fall of Vicksburg (207), and of the reasons for the ultimate victory of the North (285).

On the economic side, Mr. Eaton points out that aside from the Erlanger loan (which benefited only the Paris bankers, for it yielded the Confederacy less than three million dollars in cash of the fifteen million dollars negotiated) and the utterly inadequate taxes collected, the South had little to depend upon in the way of finances. It was driven to borrow and to put the printing presses to work, with the prospect of inevitable inflation and the astronomical prices always associated in the popular mind with the Confederacy.

Although all necessary bibliographical data is supplied in the notes, the omission of a bibliography deprives the reader of ready reference to a given source and at times necessitates a prolonged search through the notes for the desired information.

ELLA LONN

Baltimore, Maryland.

*Fourteen Hundred and 91 Days in the Confederate Army.* By W. W. Heartsill. Edited by Bell I. Wiley. (Jackson, Tennessee: McCowat-Mercer Press. 1954. Pp. 416. \$6.00.)

ANYONE INTERESTED IN CIVIL WAR HISTORY will welcome with keen delight this day-by-day account (for four years, one month, and one day) of a private soldier in a Texas regiment of the Confederate army. Two distinctive features cause this book to stand apart from other soldier narratives: it was printed by the author himself in 1876 on a small ten-dollar Octavo Novelty Press, and the entire edition of one hundred copies was illustrated by sixty-one original photographs sent to Heartsill by members of his company, the W. P. Lane Rangers. Each picture was pasted into the book by the author. Only thirteen copies of the original edition are known to have survived, and each, if offered for sale, would command a very high price.

William Williston Heartsill was born at Louisville, Tennessee, on October 17, 1839. In the late 1850's he migrated to the Lone Star State, and was clerking in a wholesale merchandise firm at Marshall, Texas, when the war came on. At once he enlisted in a company of mounted troops, the W. P. Lane Rangers, which was formally sworn into state service on April 19, 1861. About a month later this group became Company "F" of the Second Regiment of Texas Cavalry, commanded by Colonel John S. Ford. From then until the bugle sounded the South's last charge, Heartsill faithfully recorded the day-by-day events of a common soldier's life in the Southern army.

As Heartsill's military experience was long and varied, his narrative is an exceedingly valuable one. After a year's service on the southwestern frontier and a stint in prison, he was shanghaied while en route from Virginia to Texas to rejoin his command and was forced into duty with General Braxton Bragg's army in Tennessee. While serving under this commander he participated in the bloody battle of Chickamauga. In November, 1863, Heartsill and three comrades "deserted" Bragg, whom they greatly detested, and after a long walk of seven hundred miles rejoined his old unit in Texas. His detailed account of this journey, which took in portions of Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, Arkansas, Louisiana, and Texas, is one of the most valuable parts of the book as it throws much light upon the plight and attitudes of the plain folk among the turbulent border areas of the Confederacy.

Heartsill saw both sides of prison life, being incarcerated at Camp Butler for several months in 1863, and then serving as a guard for Federal prisoners at Tyler, Texas, in 1864. His narrative ends with the disbandment of his unit on May 20, 1865. After the war, he was engaged in the grocery business at Marshall, Texas, and undertook the task of printing his war journal, doing a page at a time on the little hand-operated Novelty Press. In the reprint edition of his reminiscences, the full text of Heartsill's journal has been printed in facsimile, and the sixty-one portraits have been reproduced from the original photographs. Also the nineteen pages of the soldier newspapers — *The Camp Hudson Times* and *The Western Pioneer* — are reproduced. All in all, this work is one of the best accounts of the common soldier to be found anywhere, and the editor, Bell I. Wiley, and the McCowat-Mercer Press deserve full credit for making the book available to students of the Civil War.

J. WINSTON COLEMAN, JR.

Lexington, Kentucky.

*A Hundred Years of War.* By Cyril Falls. (New York: The Macmillan Company. 1954. Pp. 419. \$6.00.)

ALTHOUGH THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR and the two World Wars of the twentieth century have received much separate attention from historians, one rarely encounters a work which places all three conflicts in perspective, along with the many minor wars of the past hundred years. In supplying this lack, the noted British historian Cyril Falls has written an informative, valuable book, published first in London in 1953 and now available in an American edition. Its chief value, however, lies in bringing to mind the lesser conflicts, for no volume of four hundred pages can do justice to the cataclysms of 1861-1865, 1914-1918, and 1939-1945. Readers of the present journal will find little new material concerning the Civil War in Mr. Falls' survey, but they will be greatly aided in placing that event in context with the Crimean War, the Sepoy Rebellion, the wars for Italian independence, the Prussian-Danish skirmish, the Seven Weeks War, and the Franco-Prussian War. The larger world-picture of the era has undoubtedly been neglected by many students of the Civil War, who have been more or less preoccupied with the magnitude and complexity of the American civil conflict.

The Civil War, according to this author, "is unsurpassed in interest. The



quality of the leadership was high. In the eastern theatre it was, on the whole, much higher on the side of the vanquished than on that of the victors, though this was by no means the case in the Mississippi valley. Though the troops on both sides were mainly civilians . . . manoeuvre and tactics frequently reached a notable standard of skill." He develops the modernity of the conflict and states that it pointed to the future in the devastation, imposed primarily by the North, which "exceeded military necessities." But despite these ravages, it was not a "total war" as we understand the term today.

Mr. Falls believes that in executive leadership "the Union had the better of it. Lincoln was not only an abler man than Davis . . . but a more powerful man." As to the generals on both sides, Lee is rated "above them all" in his mastery of strategy, tactics, and inspirational leadership. Indeed, says the author, "he must stand as the supreme figure of this survey of a hundred years of war." However, he places Grant "almost as high" as Moltke, greatly admires Sherman, and states that "no German cavalry leaders handled their troops as well as Forrest, Stuart, and Ashby on the Confederate side, or Pleasanton and Sheridan on the Federal."

Although the volume includes twenty maps, ranging from Balaclava to Leyte Gulf, many more are needed to satisfy the interested reader whose limited knowledge of geography cannot keep pace with the great variety of campaigns discussed. Equally unsatisfactory, because of a bobtailed, perfunctory listing with insufficient information, is the short bibliography of some two hundred titles, although these works are well chosen for the most part.

In summary, Mr. Falls believes that war has developed considerably in weapons and total character during the past hundred years but that "the general principles of strategy have not altered essentially." He maintains that Admiral Yamamoto was right in saying that for Japan to win the second World War "it would be necessary to dictate peace in the White House." The Japanese leader saw clearly that the defensive struggle fought by Japan was both tactically and strategically wrong and that sooner or later American power, developed "from immensely superior resources," would succeed. The Civil War obviously proved a similar case. By circumstance rather than by inclination, both the Confederacy and Japan were committed to fighting defensive wars against superior opponents. Both hoped that if they held out long enough they would get what they wanted through sheer attrition. They were wrong.

E. B. LONG

Lombard, Illinois.



*The Official Records – Sixty-three Years in the Making.\**

OF THE COUNTLESS PUBLICATIONS of the United States Government, perhaps the least read have been the two sets of records relating to military and naval affairs of the Civil War. Begun in 1864, the enterprise was not actually completed until 1927, and in the bulk of materials concerning a single subject and the length of time needed for completion of the task no other governmental undertaking has surpassed the *War of the Rebellion Official Records of Union and Confederate Armies* and the *Official Records of the Union and Confederate Navies in the War of the Rebellion*. The military series contains the staggering total of 128 volumes of 138,579 pages, plus a series of 1006 maps and sketches in a separate atlas. Naval activities, although not as extensive still account for a set of 31 volumes with more than 35,000 pages.

In tracing the story of the compilation of these records, the researcher is inevitably hampered by the paucity of available information. Inquiry at the National Archives and the Library of Congress cannot add materially to the summaries contained in the two sets themselves. Dallas Irvine, of the National Archives, has made several studies of the Confederate records, including a discussion of the Archive Office of the War Department, the repository of captured Confederate documents. In the index volume of the Army records, Elihu Root, quondam Secretary of War, presents the best outline of the work of his department, and likewise a very brief summary of naval affairs is presented by the compiler, Charles W. Stewart.

Modern warfare could not be fought without paperwork, and the Civil War was no exception. Every order, report, telegram, or other form of official communication from the smallest squad up to the army corps or flotilla had to be written, copied, transmitted, recopied, and retained. As the war progressed this paperwork piled up at the various headquarters, and in time found its way to Washington. The Adjutant General of the Army and the Librarian of the Navy were responsible for the storing of these records. The immense bulk of material can be realized when we learn that the compilers of the *Official Records* counted examined papers not by the piece but by the ton, the roomful, and even the entire contents of a building. The army volunteer records filled a four-story warehouse, the Confederate records a three-story edifice. The records of the Adjutant General's office filled one-third of the old War Department building, a structure large even for Washington. Countless military telegrams were examined, including one collection of more than two million Union dispatches. In addition, papers of other offices and bureaus, the thousands of individual contributions from all over the country, and the many donated, bought, or loaned collections had to be examined. All this material was sorted, read, and sometimes copied, and thousands of hours were spent checking duplicate

\*Editor's note: It will be the policy of *Civil War History* to devote these pages not only to reviews of current books but also to other bibliographical aspects, past and present. Thus it is hoped to provide, with a minimum of apology for belated attention, reviews of recent works of the past decade or two, along with reappraisals of older volumes in the light of present-day knowledge. Mr. Eisendrath's account of the *Official Records* aptly points the way to a wide field of bibliographical and historical reconsideration, with new assessments of interest and value to students of the Civil War.

and triplicate items. How much more valuable these publications could have been, if historians trained by today's standards could have been assigned to the task!

Many of the officers of both armies had been recent observers in the Crimea, and brought back new conceptions of tactics. In the few years afterward until the Civil War began, many new textbooks were published and troops were trained in the new methods of warfare. As these formations and maneuvers were tested, it was realized that permanent records should be kept to improve training and fighting in the future. Even during the war itself a movement to make available such information led to congressional action. A joint resolution (Senate No. 21) was introduced by Senator Henry Wilson of Massachusetts on January 20, 1864, and was sponsored in the House of Representatives by A. W. Clark on May 12. It passed the House the same day and the Senate four days later, and on May 19 was signed by President Lincoln. The Secretary of War was directed to

furnish the Superintendent of Public Printing with copies of all such correspondence, by telegraph or otherwise, reports of commanding officers, and documents of every description in relation to the existing rebellion, to be found in the archives of his department since the first day of December, 1860, to the present time — which may be in his opinion, proper to be published, which said correspondence, reports, and documents shall be arranged in their proper chronological order.

Colonel E. D. Townsend, in charge of the Adjutant General's office, was assigned to this work. By October 31, 1864, he reported that a large part of the official reports had been copied and that work was progressing.

No Confederate records became available until May, 1865, when Major General Henry W. Halleck visited Richmond shortly after its capture. On May 11, he wrote Secretary of War Stanton that he was sending over ninety boxes of Confederate archives to Washington. As was the usual procedure upon the withdrawal of a retreating army, many records of value had been taken along or destroyed, and what remained was for a time at the mercy of souvenir hunters among the Union troops. However, when Halleck took over, severe measures were enforced to gather and preserve what could be saved. He actually shipped to Washington 349 barrels and boxes of records, but only about 80 of these were of major importance. Early in June, 37 more boxes were recovered at Chester, South Carolina, and 40 more were soon shipped from Georgia.

As this material accumulated, a special bureau was organized to handle it, with Dr. Francis Lieber in charge. Definite regulations for the operation of this archive office, under direction of the Adjutant General of the Army, were put into effect. By the end of the year, with the aid of six clerks, Lieber had sorted the collection and had turned over many papers to the Treasury, Post Office, and State Departments. Secretary of War Stanton, in his annual report in November, indicated that enough material had been screened so that eight volumes of the war records, including maps, had been sent to the printers. Nothing was printed, however, because no appropriation had been made for that purpose.

In July, 1866, the resolution cited above was repealed, and Congress thereupon directed Stanton to "appoint a competent person to arrange and prepare for publication the official documents relating to the rebellion and the operations of the Army of the United States, who shall prepare a plan for said publication and estimates of the cost thereof, to be submitted to Congress at its next session." For two years Peter H. Watson, former Assistant Secretary of War, held this appointment but apparently did little or nothing.

The matter was buried in official red tape until June 23, 1874, when the first real action was authorized by act of Congress, setting up \$15,000 to begin publication. Townsend, now a general, resumed his supervisory work, aided by W. T. Barnard of the War Department, and by Joseph W. Kirkley, A. P. Tasker, S. R. Davis, and N. W. King, all clerks in the Adjutant General's office. They examined telegrams sent and received by Stanton and Halleck, and put in long overtime hours for which they were not paid. This method was discouragingly slow, and prompted Secretary of War Belknap to push through a further appropriation of \$50,000 which became available under the act of March 3, 1875.

A reorganization of personnel did little to speed up the work, because the idea still persisted that this should be done in addition to and without prejudice to other duties. H. T. Crosby was put in charge, and Barnard, who was still active in the project, was assigned to select from the Confederate material and to copy and print the finished data. Several experienced War Department clerks were assigned to the task, and additional copyists were employed. A sum of \$40,000 was added by act of Congress on July 31, 1876, and Barnard was placed in charge of the entire undertaking. He resigned on May 26, 1877, and was succeeded by his assistant, Thomas J. Saunders.

A further grant of \$20,000 on March 3, 1877, brought the total appropriated to \$125,000. However, no adequate system had been followed, and only 47 volumes (37 Union and 10 Confederate) had been compiled and put into type, only thirty copies of each being printed. In order to find information on a single point, one would have to look through five or six volumes.

Seeing that the undivided attention of a single head was needed, the Secretary of War on December 14, 1877, detailed Captain Robert N. Scott to take charge, and under Scott the "War Records Office" attained its first definite organization. The new head saw that under the act of 1874, which authorized printing of all reports, letters, telegrams, and general orders, he could easily print much material of no particular historical interest. Accordingly, it was agreed to omit such minor items as applications for appointment, contracts, muster-in records, charges of disloyalty brought anonymously or by private individuals, claims, offers of personal service, contracts and inventions, regular routine business, and unsolicited suggestions and advice.

Two more appropriations, one for \$40,000 on June 20, 1878, and another for \$40,490 on March 3, 1879, were followed by the first act providing for the distribution of the records. This act, on June 16, 1880, authorized the printing of 10,000 copies. However, as previously, only thirty "publication" copies of the 79 volumes already completed, with scattered arrangement, were made. "Publication" of these continued up to 1889. A complete set of this preliminary print is preserved in the War Department library.

Scott, now a major, worked steadily for three years and drew up a plan for methodical arrangement of his material. His plan was approved August 23, 1880, and the final outline of the complete work was set up in four series. The first of these was to include all military activities of both sides, according to campaigns and theatres of operations, in chronological order. The second series would concern matter relating to all prisoners of war and political prisoners. The third series would include all other reports of the Union authorities: proclamations, annual reports, and correspondence between Federal and State offices. The fourth and final series would serve the Confederate picture much as the third series would portray the Union side.

Publication began, and the first volume was distributed in July, 1881. As the work progressed it was found that, although records of every Union unit from company to army corps were available, the Confederate material was very incomplete, particularly with regard to the last year of the war. Because the Southerners distrusted the government for a long time after the end of the war, much material was withheld. To remedy this situation, Marcus A. Wright, a Confederate brigadier, was appointed in 1878 to collect Confederate files. His efforts aided materially and resulted in important acquisitions through loan, gift, and purchase. Many donations were made, including the papers of such leaders as Lee, Johnston, Beauregard, Longstreet, Kirby Smith, Hood, and others. Jefferson Davis, former president of the Confederacy, made his papers available, and much of importance was obtained from this source. Moreover, four important collections were acquired for \$22,000 in the late 1870's; it was soon discovered, however, that such purchases would become too expensive, and the policy was soon abandoned. Even so, the new materials were in such abundance that it became necessary to appoint other former Southern officers to represent Confederate interests and to insure impartiality in the editing and publishing process.

As many reports were missing, former officers requested the opportunity to furnish post-war papers. In 1876 General George Gordon submitted such a report, which was rejected by the Secretary of War because the enabling act had specified the inclusion only of official documents or authenticated copies. This and other rejections led to the introduction of a bill before Congress in June, 1882, which would permit correction of errors in existing reports, by amendment. In behalf of the War Records Office, Scott pointed out the controversies and confusion such a policy would lead to; the bill was ultimately defeated, and the work continued as before.

An act of July 31, 1886, provided for the inclusion of transcripts of the court-martial of Fitz John Porter, in a separate volume, with all subsequent reports concerning it. Strong political pressure must have been brought to bear in this instance, as previous policy had indicated only through footnotes all verdicts from actions involving dismissal for cowardice or misconduct, and the subsequent courts-martial.

Scott died March 5, 1887, and was succeeded by Colonel H. M. Lazelle. At his death, Scott had produced twenty-five volumes, and because so much further material had been prepared his name was included as compiler for several volumes published later.

In 1888, the "official versus unofficial" controversy flared up again, resulting in a congressional investigation and the act of March 2, 1889, which set up a board of three to prepare and publish the works. One member, selected by the Secretary of War, was to be an army officer, and the other two were to be civilian experts, with compensation to be set by the Secretary. The work was to be done within five years. Major George B. Davis, Leslie J. Perry, and Joseph W. Kirkley, the last of whom having worked on the project since 1874, became the first Board of Publication in July, 1889. Shortly thereafter, politics again entered the picture when twenty-seven senators requested the Secretary of War to appoint a former Confederate officer to serve on the board. In reply, the Secretary pointed out that more than half of the workers were from the South and that no partiality or unfairness had been shown thus far. And there the matter rested.

Various changes in the personnel of the Board took place until December 1, 1898, when the Board was dissolved, under terms of the appropriation of July 1 of that year. On July 1, 1899, the act of February 24 of the same year brought about the merger of the War Records Office with the Record and Pension Office, and the combined agency became known as the "Publications Branch" division. As much ado had been made about the inclusion of minor material, new rules were adopted, and considerable economy, through omission of trivia, governed the make-up of the later volumes.

Between 1875 and 1901, the cost of publication came to a total of \$2,858,515.67, with annual appropriations varying from \$20,000 to more than \$250,000. Before the establishment of the Board of Publication in 1889, expenditures averaged about \$60,000 per year; for the twelve-year period after 1889, the annual appropriations averaged almost \$170,000. Approximately half of the total cost was expended for printing and binding, and the remainder was devoted to civilian salaries. The pay of various army officers concerned in the project was not included in this figure.

The Act of June 16, 1880, previously cited, provided for the distribution of 10,000 copies of the Official Records, of which 7,000 were for the use of the House of Representatives, 2,000 for the Senate, and 1,000 for the Executive Department. The first five volumes were apportioned in this manner, plus some additional copies sold by the Public Printer. After August, 1882, however, the Secretary of War took charge of distribution, and by law sent 1,000 copies to the Executive Department, 1,000 copies to army officers and participants in the work, and 8,300 copies to libraries and other institutions or individuals designated by members of Congress. Each Senator could place twenty-six copies and each Representative twenty-one copies. All remaining books were put on sale by the Secretary of War at cost plus ten percent.

In 1892, the sum of \$235,000 was authorized for the printing of 500 sets for the use of members of Congress, and three years later the Secretary of War was instructed to send a complete set to each member of the current Congress who was not already entitled to receive one. Again with new Congresses, acts of 1897, 1899, and 1900 provided similar means of distribution to newly elected Congressmen. Even if the recipient died in office, his estate continued to receive new volumes as they were issued.



In the 1880's, with publication of the Army records under way, it was felt that similar treatment of the naval records was needed. This work was begun July 7, 1884, under the direction of J. R. Soley, then librarian of the Navy Department and later Assistant Secretary of the Navy. He was relieved in 1890 by Lieutenant Commander F. M. Wise, who was succeeded three years later by Lieutenant Commander Richard Rush. The final authorization for publication of their work was given by Act of Congress on July 31, 1894. By 1897, Rush had published the first five volumes. Later directors of the project were Edward K. Rawson, Lieutenant Commander George P. Colvocoresses, Charles Stewart, and Captain C. C. Marsh. The final index volume was not issued until 1927.

The Navy, like the Army, encountered difficulties in gathering its information. So little of the Confederate naval files was found that some two thousand documents, loaned by private individuals, had to be relied upon. Mason, Slidell, Yancey, Mann, and other Confederate figures were generous with the use of their papers. Also of great value were the Pickett papers, found hidden in five trunks in a Virginia barn in April, 1865.

The legislation providing for publication of 10,000 Army sets permitted the printing of a like number for the Navy. In 1898 an extra thousand sets were authorized to supply naval officers who had not received the work.

As mentioned previously, much of the tremendous volume of papers is retained and kept today in the National Archives building in Washington, where access is provided for research. Materials used in the *Official Records* are properly rubber-stamped, and microfilm facilities are available. If one has both time and patience, he can uncover much new material to settle many controversial points.

JOSEPH L. EISENDRATH, JR.

Chicago, Illinois.

*Cornerstones of Confederate Collecting.* By Richard Barksdale Harwell. Second Edition, with Facsimiles, and an Introduction by Clifford Dowdey. (Charlottesville, Virginia. 1953. Pp. ii, 35.)

THIS SLIM VOLUME IS DESIGNED to serve as a bibliographical guide to certain areas of the social history of the Confederacy, since "not only the emotional literature, but the whole scope of printed evidence of life in the Confederacy is an index to the feelings and actions of the time." The book is also designed to be a sort of handbook for prospective collectors of Confederate imprints.

The author presents what he admits is his own arbitrary selection of a score of "cornerstone" items — a partial culling of the long list of Confederate imprints, and includes entries ranging from an herbal to a biography of Stonewall Jackson. Mr. Harwell's style is enlivened by his enthusiasm for the subject. This reviewer fears, however, that the author's speculation that he is inviting "the troubles of any critic who essays to pick and choose from a too-large field" is likely to prove true. The chief value of the book lies in the insight it affords into the problems of a Confederate bibliographer, as well as in the bibliographical data supplied.

FRANK E. VANDIVER.

St. Louis, Missouri.



*A Preliminary Checklist of Tennessee Imprints, 1861-1866.* By Eleanor Drake Mitchell. (Charlottesville, Virginia. 1953.)

THIS PUBLICATION of the Bibliographical Society of the University of Virginia constitutes a valuable contribution to the literature and bibliography of the Civil War period in Tennessee. It combines the information previously available from published bibliographies, cards in the Library of Congress, and the results of research in Tennessee libraries and private collections.

It should be emphasized, as the compiler points out in the preface, that it does not purport to be a complete and final work on the subject but is offered as a preliminary checklist which "may prepare the way for more extensive and exhaustive studies in this unexplored but crucial period in the history of this state and nation." It is marred by a few inaccuracies as to names; but, even so, it is the most complete work of its kind now available, and will be welcomed by librarians, bibliographers, bibliophiles, historians, and students of the Civil War.

STANLEY F. HORN.

Nashville, Tennessee.

### *Books Received*

Briggs, Harold E., and Briggs, Ernestine B. *Nancy Hanks Lincoln: A Frontier Portrait.* (New York: Bookman Associates. 1932. Pp. 135. \$2.50.)

Brown, D. Alexander. *Grierson's Raid.* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press. 1954. Pp. 261. \$4.00.)

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Durkin, Joseph T. *Stephen R. Mallory: Confederate Navy Chief.* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press. 1954. Pp. xi, 446. \$6.00.)

Eaton, Clement. *A History of the Southern Confederacy.* (New York: The Macmillan Company. 1954. Pp. ix, 351. \$5.50.) Reviewed in this issue.

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- Pressly, Thomas J. *Americans Interpret Their Civil War*. (Princeton: Princeton University Press. 1954. Pp. xvi, 347. \$5.00.)
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- Thomas, Benjamin P. *Lincoln's New Salem*. New and revised edition. (New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1954. Pp. xiv, 166, v. \$2.50.)

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